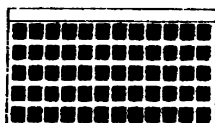


EMPIRE OF INDOSTAN.
INTERESTING
HISTORICAL EVENTS,
Relative to the
PROVINCES OF BENGAL,

LONDON: 1765.

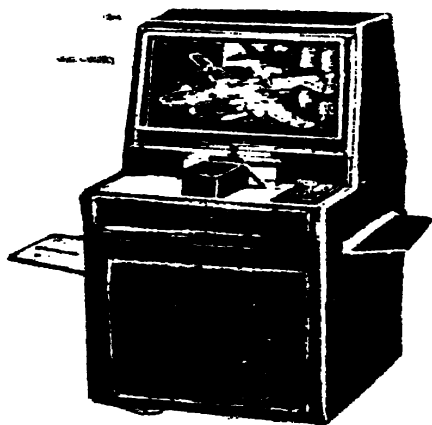
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EMPIRE OF INDOSTAN.

INTERESTING HISTORICAL EVENTS,

Relative to the
PROVINCES OF BENGAL,

PART I.

By

J. Z. HOLWELL,

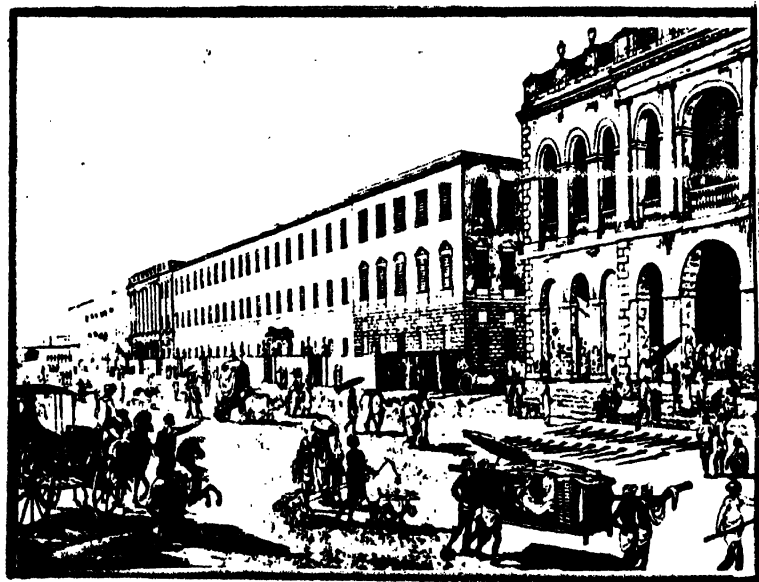
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INTERESTING
HISTORICAL EVENTS,
Relative to the
PROVINCES OF BENGAL,
AND THE
EMPIRE OF INDOSTAN.

WITH
A Seasonable HINT and PERSWASIVE

To the Honourable

The COURT of DIRECTORS of the
EAST INDIA COMPANY.

AS ALSO

The MYTHOLOGY and COSMOGONY, FASTS
and FESTIVALS of the GENTOO's,
followers of the SHASTAH.

AND

A DISERTATION on the METEMPSYCHOSIS,
commonly, though erroneously, called the
PYTHAGOREAN Doctrine.

By J. Z. HOLWELL, Esq;

PART I.

The Second Edition Corrected, with a Supplement.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT, near
Surry-Street, in the Strand. MDCCLXVI.

To the Right Honourable

CHARLES TOWNSEND, Esq;

SIR,

LAST year you indulged me with an opportunity of communicating to you, some anecdotes (little known) relative to the Mogul Empire, and the state of our *East India* trade;---in the course of that conference, you manifested to me such profound penetration, and such a ready comprehension of these subjects, that I could not resist cherishing a desire, to submit to the public my future labours on these interesting matters, under the auspices of
your

DEDICATION.

your name. I lately intimated that wish and intention, when you most obligingly and politely favored me, with your permission to dedicate to you *this First Part* of a Work, which at present employs my leisure hours : I now avail myself of the licence you have honoured me with ; and beg leave to subscribe myself, with true respect,

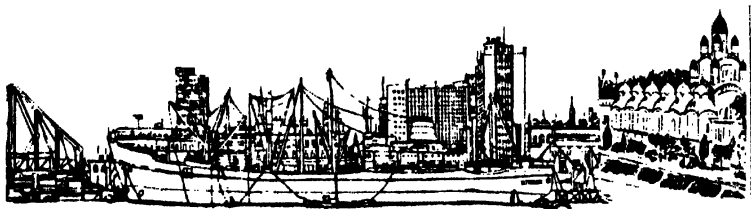
S I R,

Your most obliged

and most obedient

humble servant,

Mount Felix in Surry,
August 23^d, 1765.



CALCUTTA

THREE HUNDRED YEARS

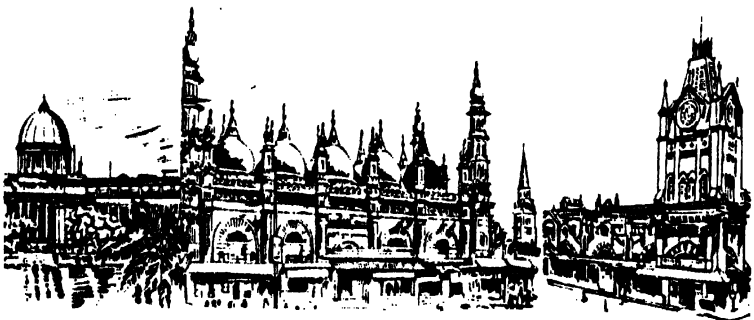
1690 - 1990



A

TER-CENTENARY

VOLUME



TO THE
P U B L I C,

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

WHEN a man, excited by an irresistible and laudable impulse for the good of his country, *first speaks* before an August Assembly; he feels a certain kind of dread, awe, and trepidation, which he finds himself unable immediately to conquer; especially if he has not been much used to speak in public, or perchance possesses some share of modesty in his composition.—Thus, I conceive, it fares with every considerate author, on his first appearance before that *August Assembly* **THE PUBLIC.**

In this plight I felt myself in the year 1758, when I exhibited to you a scene of

unparalleled horror and distress, which I judged not unworthy a place in our annals; —justice, and the necessity of the times, lately urged my second appearance, and obliged me to draw my pen in defence of injured worth and character: but now, by use and indulgence grown bolder, (a very common case) I present myself before you of my own voluntary choice.

Independency, and a pleasing retirement, however *delectable* in themselves, have yet their seasons of *vacancy* and *leisure*, that may want filling up.—And happy! ought that man to esteem himself, who can employ those *voids* and *blanks* in time to the emolument, or even literary amusement of mankind.

Such is my situation, and such are my motives, for taking up the pen again; motives, so laudable in themselves, will, I trust, engage the candor and indulgence of my readers for any defects in the following performance.

The *East-Indies*, and particularly *Bengall*, are now become so important an object and concern to *Great-Britain*, that every elucidation thereof, must, I think, be acceptable;
 3 that

that is founded on facts, just observations, and faithful recitals.

Through a course of thirty years residence in *Bengall*, my leisure hours were employed in collecting materials relative to the transactions, revolutions and occurrences of that invaluable country; and the religious tenets of its inhabitants, natives of *Indostan*; which I flattered myself, when reduced to form and order, might prove worthy your attention.

It is well known that at the capture of *Calcutta*, A. D. 1756, I lost many curious *Gentoo* manuscripts, and among them two very correct and valuable copies of the *Gentoo Shastab*. They were procured by me with so much trouble and expence, that even the commissioners of restitution, though not at all disposed to favour me, allowed me two thousand *Madras* rupees in recompence for this particular loss; but the most irreparable damage I suffered under this head of grievances, was a translation I made of a considerable part of the *Shastab*, which had cost me eighteen months hard labour: as that work opened upon me, I distinctly saw, that the *Mythology*, as well as the *Cosmogony* of the *Egyptians*, *Greeks* and *Romans*, were borrowed from

the doctrines of the *Bramins*, contained in this book; even to the copying their exteriors of worship, and the distribution of their idols, though grossly mutilated and adulterated. But more of this in the course of my present work.

I should in the compass of one year more, with the close application, I intended bestowing on it, have accomplished a complete translation of the whole *Sbaftab*; that would, I flattered myself, have been a valuable acquisition to the learned world; had not the fatal catastrophe of fifty-six put it totally out of my power ever to attempt it again.

From that change in our affairs abroad, a new chain of pursuits engrossed my time and attention; so that I could no longer devote either, to the studies I had before so much at heart——however, during the last eight months of my residence in *Bengall*, being freed from the plagues of government, (thanks to my *very honourable masters* for it) I reassumed my researches with tolerable success; which, joined to some manuscripts recovered by an unforeseen and extraordinary event (that possibly I may hereafter recite) enables me to undertake the task I now assign myself.

It is true I intended a much nobler entertainment for my readers; but as that is now irrecoverably beyond my reach, without once more doubling the *Cape of Good Hope*, (to which I feel not the least inclination) we must content ourselves with the homely fare we have before us, ranged in the best manner our straitened circumstances will admit of——as it is essentially necessary at this interesting period, that we should be able to form some clearer ideas of a people, with whom we have had such important transactions; and of whom so little is truly known *

Having studiously perused all that has been written of the empire of *Indostan*, both as to its ancient, as well as more modern state; as also the various accounts transmitted to us, by authors in almost all ages (from *Arrian*, down to the *Abbé de Guyon*) concerning the *Hindoss*, and the religious tenets of the *Bramins*, I venture to pronounce them all very defective, fallacious, and unsatisfactory to an inquisitive searcher after truth; and only tending to convey a very imperfect and injurious resem-

* Here I would be understood to mean the *Gentors* only, now labouring under *Mahometan* tyranny, but fated, I hope, soon to feel the blessings of a mild *British* government.

blance of a people, who from the earliest times have been an ornament to the creation—if so much can with propriety be said of any known people upon earth.

All the modern writers represent the *Hindoos* as a race of stupid and gross *Idolaters*: from the ancients indeed these people met with better treatment; although they too, as well as the others, were equally ignorant in the subjects they treated of.

The modern authors who have wrote on the principles and worship of the *Hindoos*, are chiefly of the *Romish* communion; therefore we need wonder the less that they (from a superstitious zeal inseparable from that communion) should depreciate and traduce the mythology of the venerable ancient *Bramins*, on so slender a foundation as a few insignificant literal translations of the *Viedam*; and these, not made from the book itself, but from unconnected scraps and bits, picked up here and there by hearsay from *Hindoos*, probably as ignorant as themselves.

From such weak grounds and evidence as this, and by the help of a few exhibitions of the *seemingly* monstrous idols of the *Hindoos*, the *Popish* authors hesitate not to stigmatize

stigmatize those most venerable sages the *Bramins*, as having instituted doctrines and worship, which if believed, would reduce them below the level of the brute creation; as every reader must have observed, who has mispent his time in the perusal of them. In the way of their proper calling and function, they were however right; as having been appointed to propagate their own system of theology abroad; though strictly speaking, their own tenets were more idolatrous than the system they travelled so far to stigmatize. On this mistaken method and false zeal of propagating *any faith* at *any rate*, I beg to be indulged in making the following general reflections, which naturally arise from the subject before us.

In the first place, I observe, ignorance, superstition and partiality to ourselves, are too commonly the cause of presumption and contempt of others——Secondly, That those whose knowledge of states and kingdoms extends no further than the limits of their native land, often imagine all, beyond it, scarce worth their thoughts; or at least greatly inferior in comparison with their own; a conclusion natural, though absurd—Thirdly, If from clime and country, we proceed to individuals; we shall see the same unwarrantable prepossession, and preference to

self take place ; and proceeding still further in our reflections, we may observe, the ~~time~~ confined way of thinking and judging, leads the multitude (and I wish I could say the multitude only) of every nation and sect, to arraign and have in utter detestation and contempt, the religious principles and worship of all that happen to be out of the pale of their own church, or mode of faith.

That every nation and *sect* should have a high and even superior opinion of the religious principles, under which they were born and educated, is extremely natural and just ; provided they do not, from an intemperate zeal of religious vanity (now so much the fashion) presume to condemn, depreciate or invade the religious principles of others—this condemning spirit can proceed only from one of the three following causes ; a defect in understanding ; a want of knowledge of the world (in men and things ;) or a bad (and restless) heart. The salvation of mankind, so much pretended, has no place in the wishes or labours of these zealots ; or they would not go about seeking whom they can confound in spirit, destroying the peace and tranquillity of their *poor* fellow christians.

Men who have been conversant with foreign countries, and made proper and benevolent remarks on the manners and principles of their inhabitants ; will not despise or condemn the different ways by which they approach the *Deity* ; but revere it still as a divine worship, though they may piously lament it deviates so much from their own.

To rescue distant nations from the gross conceptions entertained of them by the multitude, of all other persuasions, is the true business and indispensable duty of a *Traveller* ; or else his travels and remarks, can only amuse his readers, without conveying to them any useful instruction or solid satisfaction.

A mere description of the exterior manners and religion of a people, will no more give us a true idea of them ; than a geographical description of a country can convey a just conception of their laws and government. The traveller must sink deeper in his researches, would he feast the mind of an understanding reader.—His telling us such and such a people, in the *East* or *West-Indies*, worship this stock, or that stone, or monstrous idol ; only serves to reduce in our esteem, our fellow creatures, to the most abject and despicable point of light. Where-

as, was he skilled in the language of the people he describes, sufficiently to trace the etymology of their words and phrases, and capable of diving into the mysteries of their theology ; he would probably be able to evince us, that such seemingly preposterous worship, had the most sublime rational source and foundation.

The traveller, who without these essential requisites, (as well as industry and a clear understanding) pretends to describe and fix the religious tenets of any nation whatever, dishonestly imposes his own reveries on the world ; and does the greatest injury and violence to letters, and the cause of humanity—How far the productions of most travellers may justly fall under this censure, I submit to the public.

To the want of this attention and capacity in the traveller, we may ascribe in a great measure, the despicable, and I dare say unworthy notion, we too aptly entertain of most nations very remote from us ; whereas were we better informed, we should find our minds opened ; our understandings enlarged ; and ourselves inspired with that benevolence for our species ; without which, the human form becomes rather a disgrace than ornament.

I am

I am sorry to say, that in general the accounts published of the manners and religious principles of *the East and West-Indies*, have been in the light and superficial way before objected to: but as my knowledge extends only to the former, I shall confine my remarks to them; and endeavor to extricate them in some degree from the gross absurdities we have conceived of them: confessing myself amazed that we should so readily believe the people of *Indostan* a race of stupid *Idolaters*; when, to our cost, in a political and commercial view, we have found them superior to us.

Having transiently mentioned the *Viedam* and *Sbaftab*, (the *Gentoos scriptures*) it is necessary, I should inform you—The book first named, is followed by the *Gentoos* of the *Mallabar* and *Cormandel* coasts; and also by those of the Island of *Ceylon*—The *Sbaftab* is followed by the *Gentoos* of the provinces of *Bengall*; and by all the *Gentoos* of the rest of *India*, commonly called *India proper*; that is to say—the greatest part of *Orissa*, *Bengall proper*, *Babar*, *Banaras*, *Oud*, *Eleabas*, *Agra*, *Delley*, &c. all along the course of the rivers *Ganges*, and *Jumna*, to the *Indus*.

Both these books contain the institutes of their respective religion and worship ; often couched under allegory and fable ; as well as the history of their ancient Rajahs and Princes—their antiquity is contended for by the partisans of each—but the similitude of their *names*, *idols*, and great part of their worship, leaves little room to doubt, nay plainly evinces, that both these scriptures were originally *one*.—And if we compare the great purity and chaste manners of the *Sbaftab*, with the great absurdities and impurities of the *Viedam* ; we need not hesitate to pronounce, the *latter* a *corruption* of the former.—All that I need add here, is, that my remarks follow the *Sbaftab* only.

Taste, in reading, differs as much as in the choice of viands. What proves a delicious morsel to one, is disgusting to another. I was never invited to a feast in my life, that I did not regret the absence of a bill of fare :—Therefore to save you from the same regret, I here present you with a list of what is provided for your entertainment in the following sheets, in eight courses ; so that if your stomach does not stimulate you to taste the whole ; you will be enabled to fall to, on that dish, which may best suit your appetite.

I. Under

I. Under the First general head is contained—A short history of the succession to the empire of *Indoſtan*, from *Aurenge Zebe* to *Mahomet Shaw*.——This ſubject has been already touched upon by my ingenious friend Mr. *James Fraſer*; but being foreign to his more immediate concern (*the invaſion of Nadir Shaw*) he has touched it ſo ſlightly, as to convey a very imperfect idea of the *circumſtances* attending the many aſtoniſhing changes that happened in this ſhort and memorable period. Theſe particulars I was favored with at *Patna*, *A. D.* 1733, by a ſenſible *Armenian*, who reſided alternately at *Agra* and *Delby*, in a civil poſt of ſome truſt, under the Emperors; during the courſe of theſe tranſactions.

II. Tranſactions in the ſubahdaary of *Bengall*; from the period that *Jaffier Khan* ruled theſe provinces, to the uſurpation of the government by *Aliverdi Khan*; with the extraordinary circumſtances attending the riſe of this laſt mentioned *Soubab*, and his brother *Hodjee Hamet* *.

III. A

* The world has been already treated with this part of my ſubject, by a gentleman in his lucubrations, printed in *Edinburgh* 1761, under the title of
 “ *Reflections on the government of Indoſtan, and a ſhort*
Sketch.

III. A summary account of the provinces of *Bengall*, (properly so called :) it's principal towns; their bearings and distance from each other, and from *Calcutta*; with an estimate of their revenues; and a seasonable and perswasive hint to the gentlemen in the *East-India* direction.

"Sketch of the history of Bengall, from the year 1730, to 1756." This little piece fell into my hands, about a year and a half after it was printed.—On perusing it, I could not avoid being surprized at finding *The Author's* "Short sketch, &c." was taken from part of the *Manuscripts* herein before-mentioned, and makes from page 33 to 50, of his second epistle.—These *Manuscripts* were penned by me in the year 1750, in my passage to *Europe*, from materials collected abroad. I communicated them, during my short stay in *England*, to my friends, Sir *William Baker*, Mr. *Mabbot*, Mr. *R. Drake*, Mr. *Davis* and Doctor *Campbell*.—The original was lost at the capture of *Calcutta*, but after my second return in 1757, I learnt, a copy had been taken of it without my knowledge, by a gentleman to whom I lent it abroad—from this copy I was permitted to take another. How *the Author* of the *Reflections* came by it, he best knows.—He honours me in transcribing from it, but he would have honoured himself more, had he acknowledged from whence he took it; and had not taken such fruitless pains to disguise his (yet obvious) plagiarism; by mangling, maiming and curtailing my subjects in the manner I conceive he has done.

IV. A summary view of the *fundamental* religious tenets of the *Gentoo*s, followers of the *Sbaftab*.

V. A short account, from the *Sbaftab*, of the creation of the *worlds*, or universe.

VI. The *Gentoo* manner of computing time ; and their conceptions touching the *age of the worlds* ; and the period of their dissolution.

VII. An account and explanation of the *Gentoo* fasts and festivals ; with a representation of their grand feast of the *Drugab* : comprising a view of their principal idols, and the genealogy of their *subordinate deities*.——If the fasts and festivals of any nation are once clearly understood ; there wants little more to convey to us a distinct idea of their religious principles ; the *one*, being the only true criterion of the *other*.

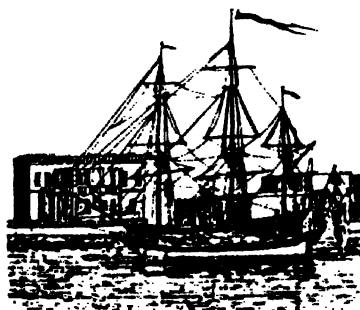
VIII. A dissertation on the *Gentoo* doctrine of the *metempsychosis* ; improperly called *Pythagorean*, by all who have wrote on this subject, hitherto so little understood.

Having

Having thus set forth my real motives for taking up the pen again, and opened the plan of my intended work; I shall here close this preliminary discourse: the favorable acceptance of my labors, by the candid public, is all the recompence hoped, or wished for, by their

Obedient humble servant,

J. Z. HOLWELL.



C H A P. I.

*The succession of the Mogull Emperors from
Auring Zebe.*

WHOEVER has attentively perused the histories of the rise of states and kingdoms, must have made this melancholy observation; that the approaches to usurped royalty, dominion and power, are *generally* founded, in the first instance, on the subduction of every virtue from the human breast; as, the sacred ties of justice, natural affection, gratitude and *true* benevolence. A few exceptions may possibly subsist in the course of many thousand years, against our conclusion; but they are so *very few*, that we think they cannot in the least invalidate our general assertion.

The glittering prospects of a crown, so dazzle and dim the eye of cool reflection and reason, that it becomes *blind* to every other consideration of humanity.

Ambition, or a restless thirst after power and dominion, has ever been the *bane* of the civil rights and liberties of mankind; and seems to be a passion implanted in the original nature and construction of man:—if otherwise, his conduct is wholly unaccountable: for we see that every individual of the species, in every rank and degree, is grasping and labouring to possess that which every individual is so materially concerned to prevent; *neither* of them adverting to this invariable truth: That *he* who invades the liberty, rights and property of *another*, gives, at the same time, a lesson and just cause for dispossessing *himself*.—Why this eternal warfare and contention for dominion between man and man, collectively or separately, (from his creation to this hour) was originally implanted in him, we may, in a future dissertation, attempt to solve; here we will only lament, that so it undeniably is.

The miserable effects of this fatal passion for *rule*, is no where more strongly exemplify'd, than in the short recital we are going to make of the successors of *Aurang Zebe* to the throne of *Indistan*; to which he himself did not arrive without wading through a sea of blood, and a continued chain of almost unparallel'd religious fraud,
per-

perfidy and cruelty: leaving on record a flagrant proof, That no ties, however sacred, can resist, or come in competition with, the charms of royalty. His bloody example was very exactly copied by his descendants.

Auring Zebe deceasing the 21st of February 1707, was succeeded in the throne by his second son *Mahommed Mauzum*; for, notwithstanding the positive injunction in *Auring Zebe's* last Will, in favour of his son *Mahommed Azem Shaw*, *Mahommed Mauzum* adopting the successful example of his father, disputed the crown with his elder brother; who, in battle near *Agra*, was defeated and killed. *Mahommed Mauzum* was immediately proclaimed Emperor, and assumed (amongst other titles mentioned by Mr. *Frazer*) the title of *Shaw Allum, King of the World*. I have, in my collection, two gold Mohurs struck in this Emperor's Reign, Anno 1709, and 1711; on the first is impressed *Shaw Allum*; on the other, *Babadr Shaw, The Valiant King*; which title he was, latterly, fondest of.

Anno
1707.

*Auring
Zebe.*

His reign, though extended to the term of six years, was unhappy and turbulent. The fortune of war gave him the succession to his father's dominions; but he succeeded

not to his capacity and fame: perplexed
Shaw Al- with the restless ambition of his *four sons*
lum. who in his life time shewed themselves
 competitors for his crown, he died of dis-
 content and grief, *Anno* 1713.

Their names were, *Mauz O'din*, *Mabom-*
med Azím, *Raffeil al Kaddr*, and *Kbojista*
Anno *Akhter*: they had been some years Gover-
 1713. nors of distinct provinces, and were each,
 at the death of their father, at the head of
 a puissant army to support their several pre-
 tensions to the throne.

Mabommed Azím, being superior in force,
 wealth, and reputation, to the other three
 brothers; they joined in league against him;
 taking the most solemn oath on *Kboran*, to
 be faithful to each other, and to submit to
 an equal partition of the Empire, in thirds,
 as soon as they should defeat and succeed
 against their brother.

In consequence of this compact, the three
 brothers united their respective armies; and
 a general battle ensued: in the first heat of
 which, *Mabommed Azím* was killed by the
 shot of an arrow, as he was gallantly charg-
 ing, on his elephant, the center of his bro-
 thers army; which he was informed was
 com-

commanded, in person, by his eldest brother *Mauz O'din*.

The treasures of *Mahommed Azim*, by the dexterity of *Zulfecar Khan*, an Omrah in the interest of *Mauz O'din*, fell into the hands of the latter; with which having privately bought over most of the troops of his two remaining brothers, he attacked them on the field of battle, in violation of his solemn oath.

The brothers being no ways prepared for this sudden, unsuspected and perfidious stroke; were capable of making but small resistance: the elder of the two, *Raffeeil al Kaddr*, was presently killed; and, what is worthy remark, fell upon the body of his brother *Mahommed Azim*. *Khojista Akhter*, the youngest of the four, collecting some few of his own and *Raffeeil al Kaddr*'s troops, fled towards the province of *Deccan*, his government; but being pursued and attacked by *Mauz O'din*, shared the same fate with his brothers.

Thus *Mauz O'din* became, like his father and grandfather, possessed of the throne of *Indostan*, by the perfidious destruction of his brothers; one circumstance however might be pleaded in behalf of *Mauz O'din*,

which neither of the other two could lay any claim to,—for he was the legal heir to the crown: but it may also justly be said, that he had waved and given up his legal right, when he entered into the voluntary compact with his brethren. He was proclaimed Emperor by the stile and title of *Mauz O'din Jebandar Shaw, The King who possesses the World*; and appointed *Zulfecar Khan* his Vizir.

*Shaw Je-
bandar.
A.D. 1715.*

Jebandar was a weak Prince; and very soon after he thought himself in secure possession of the throne, he sunk and lost himself in the luxuries and debaucheries of the Seraglio: so wholly devoting his hours to a famed courtesan called *Lol Koar*, (better known in *Indostan* by the name of *Loll Koo-ee*) that he neglected every duty which ought to distinguish the Man, and the King.

This courtesan was of exquisite beauty, and highly excelled as a dancer and singer, in which profession she was originally bred; besides these qualifications, it is said, her conversation was engaging and bewitching. The Monarch, intoxicated with her allurements, had no will but hers; by her influence she filled all places of the highest trust and honour, with her base relations. This insatuated conduct, brought the Emperor

peror and Empire into the lowest contempt; and gave universal disgust to all the Omrahs and great officers of the kingdom; who one by one, under various pretexts, withdrew themselves from court; and meditated a favourable conjecture to depose their sovereign.

Amongst the disaffected, were two Generals and Omrahs of the court, of distinguished character and authority; named *Hoffan Aly Khan*; and *Abdallah Khan*; brothers of the tribe of the *Seyds*, for whom *Mabometans* bear a religious veneration. These, in concert with others of the Omrahs, determined to raise *Mabommed Furrukhsir* to the throne; and suddenly, at the head of a choice body of troops, retired towards *Bengal*, where *Furrukhsir* then resided.

This young Prince was the son of *Mabommed Azim*, already mentioned, and nephew to the Emperor; he had resided some years at *Dacca*, (then the metropolis of *Bengal*) by the appointment of his grandfather *Shaw Allum*, where he was so much beloved, that the inhabitants of that city, to this day, in their common songs lament his fate, with tears; and celebrate his memory.

Anno
1715.

When *Furrukhsir* first received advice of *Shaw Allum's* death, and the fatal catastrophe of his father and uncles; he withdrew from *Dacca*; knowing his uncle, *Jebandar*, would never think himself secure on the throne, whilst so near a pretender to it was in being. Much perplexed, and irresolute what course to take, as he was at the head of an inconsiderable, but faithful body of horse, retiring out of the province, he was met by express messengers from the revolted; urging his immediate advance to *Patna* in the province of *Babaar*; where on his arrival he was received by *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan*, *Seyd Abdallah Khan*, and other principal Omrahs and Officers; who instantly proclaimed him Emperor of *Indostan*.

On the first news of this revolt and competitor, the court was struck with a panic; but the Emperor, buried in the embraces of his beloved *Loll Kooree*, treated it as an impotent attempt hardly worth his notice; contenting himself with sending his son *Eas O'din*, at the head of 15000 horse, to suppress him; with orders to bring the traitor's head.

Express after express arriving with intelligence that *Furrukhsir's* party gained strength

strength every hour ; and that he was in full march towards *Agra* ; the Emperor re-inforced his son with a large body of troops, under the joint command of his Vizir *Zulfecar Khan*, and his favourite *Gokuldas Khan* ; between whom there subsisted much private jealousy and enmity.

Furrukhsir had by this time drawn together a respectable army ; and thought himself strong enough to quit *Patna* ; which he accordingly did, and by forced marches advanced as far as *Chivalram* in the province of *Eleabas*, where he was met by *Eas O'din*, at the head of his 15000 horse. This young Prince, after a short contest, perceiving the superiority of the enemy's forces ; thought it advisable to retreat towards *Agra*, which he did in good order ; and in a few days was joined near *Agra* by the troops, sent by the Emperor under the command of the Vizir and *Gokuldas Khan*, to reinforce them : here it was resolved to wait the approach of the enemy, for which they did not wait long ; and a general battle quickly ensued.

Anno
1715.

The Emperor's forces, by the advice of *Zulfecar Khan*, were formed into three divisions. The center was commanded by
Eas

Eas O'din ; the right by *Gokuldas Khan* ; and the left by *Zulfecar Khan*.

Furrukhsîr observed the like division of his forces. He gave the command of his center to *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan* ; the right to *Seyd Abdallab Khan* ; and led on the left himself ; preferring this, as the post of the greatest honor ; because it was the post of greatest danger, as being opposed to *Gokuldas Khan* ; who commanded the right division of the Emperor's forces ; and was justly esteemed the most consummate general and intrepid soldier in the Empire.

Mr. *Frazer* in his short narrative intimates, that the Emperor was in person in this engagement ; but herein his intelligence deceived him : for it is a known fact, that he was never roused so far from the lethargic pleasures he was immersed in, as once to quit the Seraglio ; and indeed the flattering informations that were hourly conveyed to him of the defeat of the rebels, by *Loll Koorée* (who dreaded his absence) prevented his ever bestowing a thought that way ; until it was too late to think of it to any purpose. But to resume our subject.

The

The battle was fought with great obstinacy and gallantry on both sides.—Wonders are recorded of the spirited actions and personal bravery of *Eas O'din* and *Gokuldas Khan* ; and not less reported of the valour of *Furrukhsîr*, and *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan* ; but the decisive stroke of victory was given by *Seyd Abdallah Khan* : this General, observing the Vizir draw off and retire with his division, wheeled and vigorously attacked *Eas O'din* in flank ; whilst he was hard pressed in front by *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan*, *Eas O'din* at the same time learning that the brave *Gokuldas Khan* was killed, and his right wing defeated by *Furrukhsîr* ; a general rout soon followed.—*Eas O'din* escaped with difficulty from the battle ; and by a change of swift horses reached *Delby*, where in the presence of his father, he died of his wounds in an hour.

Furrukhsîr prudently ordered the troops to be spared in the pursuit. This clemency, and the addresses of some emissaries sent amongst them, operated so strongly on them ; that, to a man, they revolted from the Emperor ; and joined *Furrukhsîr* : whose triumph, on this happy success, was greatly abated by the absence and supposed death of *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan*. Short sighted mortal ! little didst thou at that time know,

that thou wert regretting the loss and life of the man, who in a very short period would deprive thee of thine own !—A large reward being promised by the Prince ; and search being made ; *Seyd Hoffman Aly Khan* was found amongst the slain with signs of life, and his recovery effected.

The treacherous conduct of the Vizir *Zulfecar Khan*, it was said, proceeded from cowardice, and resentment at *Gokuldas Khan's* being joined in the command with him (a source from which the greatest designs have often proved abortive.) When he retired with his division, he made the best of his way to *Delby* ; where, soon after, the arrival of the unfortunate *Eas O'din*, too plainly spoke the destiny of the Emperor his Father.

Some feeble attempts were made to raise fresh troops, and put the city in a posture of defence ; but the sudden approach of *Furrukhsir*, put a period to every hope. The Emperor, his uncle, fell into his hands without resistance. His head was immediately cut off ; and his trunk being fixed upon an elephant, was exposed round the city. His Vizir, *Zulfecar Khan*, was tied by the feet to the tail of the same elephant, and dragged until he expired : a death cruel,
and

and esteemed the most dishonourable that can be inflicted upon a criminal ; but scarcely severe enough for that minister who sacrifices the interest, and cause of his King, to his own private resentments. He was little lamented ; for by his mal-administration, whilst Vizir, he had acquired the universal hatred of the people.

Mauz O'din Jehander Shaw thus falling a sacrifice to love and indolence ; *Mahomed Furrukhsîr* was proclaimed Emperor of *Indostan*, without opposition. The first acts of his government consisted, in rewarding those who had raised him to the throne. He appointed *Seyd Abdallah Khan* his Vizir ; and *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan* his *Bukshi*, or Pay-Master General, with the title of *Emir al Omrah* ; (*The Prince of Princes*) and bestowed upon him the government of *Deccan* ; suitably rewarding the other Omrahs that had rendered him service.

Anno
1715.
*Mahom-
med Fur-
rukhsîr.*

But before we enter on the reign of *Furrukhsîr*, we beg to be indulged a few words on the late murdered Emperor *Jehander* ; whose character very minutely resembled that of the unfortunate and licentious Roman, *Marcus Antonius*.

He was thought by his father, *Shaw Alum*, the only General capable of repulsing the dangerous annual invasions of the *Bo-luccais*; which threatned the Empire on the side of *Persia*. Prince *Mauz O'din* was sent against these warlike people, at the head of the choicest troops in the Empire; and in a continued campaign of five years, he had many and signal battles with the invaders; that gave him vast renown. In one of these, when the enemy was intrenched behind a strong and thick wood, on which side they could only be attacked, he cut a passage through the wood; forced their intrenchments sword in hand, and hardly any of the enemy escaped the slaughter. No sooner were the particulars of this action arrived at court, than the Emperor his father, gave him the title of *Prince of the Hatchets*; one of the *honorary titles* ever since given to the first Prince of the blood.

His disposition, before he came to the throne, was so engaging and amiable; that he became the idol of the whole Empire. This drew on him the jealousy of his father; who, to counterbalance his growing influence, heaped that partial power and favor on his second son, *Mahommed Azim*, (the father of *Furrukhsir*) which enabled him to make the stand he did against his brother's
 legal

legal right of succession ; at the demise of *Shaw Allum* ; as before recited. In short, if he could be defended from that perfidious stroke against his other two brothers ; and had escaped the bewitching snares of that eastern *Cleopatra*, *Loll Kooree* ; he most probably would have left a more shining character, (and a much more honorable one) on the records of fame, than that of his grandfather *Auring Zebe*.

Loll Koar had the honor of being condemned, for life, a prisoner in the royal prison, or castle of *Selingur*. Some of her base relations, who had been raised to places of high trust, were cut off by the conqueror ; and others degraded.

Furrukhsir having obtained the diadem, as before related, peace *seemed* to be settled in the Empire : but the evil destiny of that Prince forbad its long continuance. During this period, the power of the *Seyds* grew enormous ; and left the Emperor the name and trappings of royalty only : for they disposed of all important posts by their sole authority ; amassed immense wealth, and sequestered the public revenues to their own private emolument ; securing thereby the attachment of the principal officers of the crown :

crown : who (with a very few exceptions) were intirely devoted to their interest.

Furrukhsir very soon saw, and felt his despicable state of dependance ; but could not easily forget, how much he owed to the spirited conduct and friendship of these ambitious brothers. He patiently submitted to the many indignities he labored under : without meditating any thing against them ; the life and crown they had given him, he knew, still depended too much on their will and disposal : he dreaded their power, which indeed was greater than any subjects in this despotic government can possess, with safety to their Prince ; or than can be consistent with his honor.

Wearied at length, at finding himself this cypher of a King ; he nobly determined to free himself from the shackles with which he had been bound so long ; by having both the brothers assassinated at the same time : *Abdallah Khan* at *Delby* ; and *Hoffan Aky Khan*, as he was upon his march to his government at *Deccan* ; where he was going to dispossess *Nizam al Muluck*.

A design, so complicated in its nature, could not be carried on without being communicated

communicated to many ; amongst these the Emperor chiefly intrusted and depended on the two *Qemrahs*, *Kbondoran Khan*, and *Mhîr Jumla*, for the execution of it ; they being almost the only two officers about the court, who had been neglected by the powerful *Seyds*. *Kbondoran* was suspected of betraying the whole to *Abdallah Khan* : whether this was the fact, is uncertain ; but it is very certain, both the brothers had early intelligence of the design against them ; and determined to have the start, by deposing the Emperor.

The Vizir immediately withdrew from court ; sent exprets upon exprets to recall his brother ; and put himself at the head of a body of troops, whose commander he was, by virtue of his post.

Furrukhsîr finding his intentions against the *Seyds* discovered, had recourse to dissimulation ; He sent his mother to the Vizir ; charged with his solemn protestations of the falshood of the information the Vizir had received ; and with professions of inviolable friendship and affection intreating, that he would return to court ; and contradict any advices he might have dispatched to his brother.

The Vizir having no room to doubt of his intelligence of the Emperor's projected affassination, returned for answer—That, as a mark of the sincerity of his professions, he should discharge his guards and servants; and submit to receive such as he, the Vizir, should think proper to place about him. This hard condition the Emperor abjectly and unadvisedly consented to; and the Vizir, contented with this security, waited the arrival of his brother, without proceeding further. These events fell out about the beginning of the year 1719.

Seyd Hossun Ali Khan returned at the head of a strong body of horse, immediately on the receipt of his brother's letters; and arrived at *Delby* the 14th of *February* 1719; where after a short conference with the Vizir, and *Ajeet Singh* (*Mahab Rajah*, and father-in-law to the Emperor) and with several principal Omrahs; they all proceeded to the apartment of *Auring Zebe's* daughter in the castle of *Selimgur*; and demanded the delivery of *Raffceil al Dirjaat*, (son of *Raffceil al Kaddr*, third son of *Babadr Shaw*) a youth about 17 years of age; proclaimed him Emperor of *Indostan*; and swore allegiance to him.

Proceeding thence to the palace with their new King, as soon as they came into the presence of *Furrukhsîr*; the *Seyds* upbraided him with perfidy and ingratitude; and *Ajeet Singh*, with the breach of his coronation oath; in imposing the *Jeserah* (or poll tax) upon the *Hindoos*: they then divested him of his sword, and ensigns of royalty; and, with little ceremony, informed him they had raised *Raffecil Dirjaat* to the throne; to whom they forced him to pay obeisance; and then imprisoned him in a tower over the principal gate of the citadel.

Anno
1719.
Raffecil al
Dirjaat.

The day after his imprisonment, he was miserably deprived of his sight. On the second, he attempted to finish his torments by a dose of poison; but it proved ineffectual; on the third day, the *Vizir* sent executioners to strangle him: but as soon as he felt the cord about his neck (still wretchedly desirous of life) he interposed his hands, and forcibly broke it; dragging on, thus, a miserable being, until the next day, the 24th *February* 1719; when he was at last strangled, after a reign of little more than four years. *Mr. Frazer* says, seven; but this cannot be; for, by his own account, *Auring Zebe* deceased in the beginning of the year 1707: his son, *Shaw Allum*, reigned six years; that is, to the beginning of the year 1713. *Fur-*

rukhsir was murdered in the beginning of the year 1719; so that if his succession had been uninterrupted, it could have been no more than six years: but the intervening reign of his uncle, *Mauz O'din Jebandar Shaw*, who sat on the throne 18 months, reduces the reign of *Furrukhsir* to four years and six months.

The *Seyds* finding they had mistaken the genius of the young Emperor *Dirjaat*, (whom they had raised to the throne in preference to his elder brother *Raffeeil al Dowlat*, as judging his youth would be more subservient to their views) took him off by poison; when he had reigned about three months: and raised to the throne his eldest brother, just abovementioned, who assumed the stile and title of *Shaw Jeban*, (*King of the World*.)

Anno

1719.

*Raffeeil al
Dowlat.
Shaw Je-
han.*

The brothers, intoxicated with their excess of power, began by various acts of oppression to create themselves enemies from all quarters: the universal hatred of the people, for their repeated murders, co-operating with the envy of the principal *Rajabs* and *Omrabs*, (who could endure no longer to see the *Seyds* engross wholly a power and authority in the Empire, which they themselves

selves wanted a share in) a powerful party was now formed against them.

At the head of this confederacy were *Sa-vejee Jeet Singh*, (more commonly known by the name of *Rajah Jai Singh*) *Gopaul Singh Bowderee*, and *Chivalram Roy*; all puissant Rajahs. The first named being hereditary governor of the fortress of *Agra*.—Here it is apposite that we recite an anecdote of this empire, which is not generally known.

When the *Hindoo* Rajahs, or Princes of *Indostan*, submitted to *Tamerlane*; it was on these capital stipulations: That the Emperors should marry a daughter of *Rajah Jeet Singh's* house: that the head of this house should be, in perpetuity, governors of the citadel of *Agra*; and anoint the King at his coronation: and, that the Emperors should never impose the *jefferah* (or poll tax) upon the *Hindoes*.

These three powerful *Rhaasepoot Rajahs*, with some discontented *Omrah*s, withdrew themselves; and assembled together in the neighbourhood of *Agra*: and, on the first intelligence of the murder of *Raffieil Dirjaat*, released (from a forty years imprisonment in the castle of *Agra*) *Nicosir*; a son

Anno
1719.

of the great *Ekbbar* ; and proclaimed him Emperor : and raised a respectable army to support their election against that of the *Seyds*, in favor of *Shaw Jehan*.

On the first notice of this formidable competitor, *Seyd Hossan Ali Khan* was dispatched at the head of forty thousand horse towards *Agra* ; and was met, within four miles of that city, by *Nicosir's* forces, under the command of *Jeet Singh* : who putting himself at the head of his *Rhaasepoots*, intrepidly charged *Seyd Hossan Ali Khan's* army. A long and bloody conflict ensued ; wherein, at last, *Nicosir's* forces began to give way ; when the *Rhaasepoots*, by the example of their Rajah *Jeet Singh*, displayed the yellow scarf, (the *Rhaasepoots* signal for conquest or death) by which means the battle had a sudden turn. *Hossan Ali Khan's* troops, struck with terror at seeing that dreaded signal, and the fury with which the *Rhaasepoots* returned to the charge, soon turned their backs and fled ; disregarding as well the heroic example, as menaces of their General ; who, finding all endeavours to rally them fruitless, made the best retreat he could with them.

Shaw Jehan wisely profiting by the error which had proved fatal to *Mauz O'din* ; in a situa-

situation similar to his own ; immediately took the field with the Vizir *Seyd Abdallah Khan* : and with a large and chosen body of men marched to support and re-inforce *Seyd Hoffman Ali Khan*.

This General, in his retreat, or rather flight, had been vigorously pursued by *Rajah Jeet Singh*, and his nominal Emperor *Nicosir* ; solicitous, if possible, to prevent his union with *Shaw Jehan* and his brother ; who were (they had learned) on their march to his succour.—In this judicious intention they failed ; for *Hoffman Ali Khan*, with his beaten troops, joined the Emperor before the *Rajah* could overtake him. Both armies being greatly harrassed with their severe marches, the decisive battle, which was to determine the possession of this mighty Empire, was delayed until the next day,

Hoffman Ali Khan, it was said, selected the evening before the battle, a body of 2000 horse ; composed all of subaltern officers ; to whom he gave strict command, that they should pay regard to nothing else in the approaching engagement, but the cutting off, or taking prisoner *Nicosir*, or *Jeet Singh*.

The battle began soon after sun-rise the next morning ; and was fought with in-

credible fury and obstinacy, for the space of three hours : but, at length, the party above mentioned so well executed what they had in charge, that they took *Nicosir* prisoner ; which being immediately known to his party, they were soon after defeated, or rather put to flight : for in these eastern battles, if the principal on either side is killed or taken prisoner, there is an end generally to the contest.—The issue of this battle, which was fought about the middle of *June* 1719, on the plains of *Fattahad*, put *Shaw Jehan* in tranquil possession of the Empire.

The Emperor gave *Nicosir* the choice of death, or loss of sight : he preferred the latter ; which was executed on him in the field of battle ; and he then was conducted back to his prison at *Agra* ; a melancholy victim to the ambition of others.

Savagee Jeet Singh, with a select body of *Rhaasépoots*, by a well conducted retreat recovered *Agra* ; and was soon after reconciled to the King and admitted to favour ; conformable to the steady policy of this government : in keeping a good understanding with the principal Rajahs ; and more especially with the *head* of this house ; who is ever capable of raising and fomenting a very formidable party, upon any intended revolution

lution in this despotic and precarious monarchy.

Shaw Jehan lived not long to enjoy his high dignity; for he died a natural death, soon after his return to *Delby*, towards the latter end of the year 1719. Happy! we may say, in having made this quiet and easy exit; for had he discovered a wish to make himself a *King*, indeed; it is more than probable, he would have shared the same fate with his three predecessors.

His death, for some days, was concealed by the singular address of the *Seyds*; and *Hossan Ali Khan*, on the night that *Shaw Jehan* deceased, privately set out with a small, but select party of horse for *Agra*, where he published his death: and, with the participation of the *Mbaabab* Rajah, *Savajee Jeet Singh* immediately proclaimed *Mabomed Shaw*, Emperor of *Indostan*; who was by the Rajah anointed accordingly. *Mabomed Shaw* was the only son of *Khojistab Akbter*, before mentioned; the youngest son of *Shaw Allum*. . Soon after, the Vizir and the other great officers of the crown arrived at *Agra*, to pay their submission to the new Emperor; and were all confirmed in their posts.

Ma-

Mahommed Shaw was soon convinced, by the first movements of the *Seyds*, that though he was raised to the possession of the ensigns and exteriors of royalty ; he was in effect little better than a prisoner of state ; whilst the two brothers exercised the uncontrouled authority they had so long and successfully usurped. He did not want courage ; but plainly saw their power was too great to be attacked by open force : he therefore wisely, for some time, dissembled his sentiments and resentments ; until he could form a proper judgment who, amongst the Omrahs and officers, were trust worthy ; and in whom he could with safety to himself put a perfect confidence.

It was not long before his penetration pointed out the persons he sought for. *Mahommed Amin Khan*, *Heydr Kuli Khan*, and *Kenderan*, all Omrahs of the first rank, he was well assured, were inveterate, though concealed enemies to the *Seyds* : to these Omrahs therefore he ventured to open himself, about the middle of *September* 1720 ; and most pathetically lamented his abject dependant state, under the tyranny of the *Seyds* ; imploring their assistance to extricate and free him ; themselves ; and his people from their usurped power.

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This overture from the Emperor met, with a warm reception from the Omrahs; they swore fidelity to him; and he, on his part, swore that *Mahommed Amim Khan* should succeed to the Vizirut; *Kbondoran* to the *Mbir Bukhsfi*; and be created *Embir al Omrah*: and that *Heydr Kuli Khan*, (who was at this time General of the Ordnance) should obtain the Soubahdary of *Abmedabad*.

These preliminaries settled; and the fidelity of these Omrahs secured, more by making it their own interest, than from any attachment to the royal family; a favourable occasion was only wanting: and the *Seyds* themselves contributed in some degree to their own downfall,—for now the measure of their iniquity was full,—too long had they reigned the oppressors of their Kings, and of the people.

The first act of the *Seyds* power, after the accession of *Mahommed Shaw*, was to oblige him to declare *Nizam al Muluck* a traitor; and demand his appearance at court.

Nizam had been long obnoxious to the *Seyds*: the insurrection raised by *Rajah Jeet Singh* in favour of *Nicasir*, had prevented their

their looking towards him sooner; but now, having fixed *Mahommed Shero* on the throne, they determined to suppress him.

Nizam, well knowing there was no medium between death and the jealousy of the *Seyds*, in place of paying obedience to the royal mandate, killed the gursborders (messengers) that brought it; advanced from his government of *Malva* to *Eugon*; where he seized the royal treasure: from thence he penetrated into *Deccan*, the government of *Seyd Hossan Ali Khan*, attacked the capital of the province and took it; assumed the Soubasship; and sending his *Niabs*, or deputy governors to every part, displaced those of *Hossan Ali Khan*; and treated even his women with great indignities. After these exploits (to which it was said he was privately instigated by the Emperor, purposely to exasperate the *Seyds*) he wrote the most submissive letter to the Emperor; extenuating and palliating the necessity of a conduct, to which the tyranny and injustice of the *Seyds* had drove him.

On news of the outrages committed by *Nizam* in the *Deccan*, the Emperor put on a well dissembled rage; and swore by *Mahomet*, he would take the field against the rebel himself. This resolution was the result

of a private conference with his associated Omrahs; it being judged, the first necessary step for the reduction of these *dangerous brothers* was, to separate them: accordingly the Emperor ordered the Vizir *Seyd Abdallah Khan* to return to *Delby*, to superintend the civil administration; and preserve the peace of that city during his absence: and himself, with *Seyd Hossan Ali Khan*, and the rest of the Omrahs, took the field on the 28th of *September 1720*, with a royal and powerful army, for the pretended reduction of the rebel *Nizam al Muluk*.

The Emperor made a long march that day towards *Deccan*, and encamped late in the evening. Here the means for assassinating *Seyd Hossan Ali Khan* were adjusted by the three Omrahs, to whom the King left the execution of this important event: they found it necessary now to discover their design to several other Omrahs, who they knew had been deeply injured by the *Seyds*, and were as inveterate as themselves. Amongst these, one *Hyddr Khan*, a small Munsubdar of distinguished courage, was pitched upon to perpetrate the deed; and as the attempt must be attended with apparent hazard to *Hyddr Khan*, *Mabommed Amim Khan*, and *Heydr Kuli Khan*, to encourage him they solemnly engaged to be at hand
with

with a select party to rescue him from the rage of *Hoffan Ali Khan's* followers.

Early the next morning the signal was made for decamping, and *Seyd Hoffan* went into the Emperor's tent to pay his obeisance and receive his orders : all the Omrahs and officers, as customary, were round his tent : *Hyddr Khan* placed himself at the door with a petition in his hand : as soon as *Seyd Hoffan* came out of his tent, and had seated himself in his pallenkeen, *Hyddr Khan* presented his petition ; and whilst *Seyd Hoffan* was attentively perusing it, the assassin stabbed him with his kunjaar (dagger) between the neck and collar bone, of which wound he instantly expired.

Notwithstanding the solemn engagement to rescue *Hyddr Khan*, it was judged expedient to sacrifice this daring man, that his death might blunt and satiate, in some measure, the wrath of those guards who were in immediate attendance on the General's person ; by whom *Hyddr Khan* was assaulted with the utmost fury ; and though, drawing his scymitar, he defended himself with astonishing bravery for some time ; yet, overpowered by numbers, he was cut to pieces. Nevertheless the tumult raised about the body did not cease, until *Mahommed Amim Khan*.
Khan-

Kbondoran, Heydr Kuli Khan, and their troops came up to quell it. "The Emperor mounting his elephant and causing proclamation to be made to the army, that the *Embir al Omrah* was killed by his order, the confusion subsided ; except in one quarter ; where five thousand troops, commanded by *Jieratt Khan*, nephew to the deceased General, breathed nothing but revenge : between these and the royal troops a sharp conflict ensued, in which many were killed (on both sides) amongst whom was a son of *Mahommed Amin Khan* ; but *Jieratt Khan* falling by an arrow discharged by the King, (who it was said emptied three quivers in the engagement) the rest called for quarter.

The Emperor proceeding to the tent of *Seyd Hossan Ali Khan*, sat upon his elephant and saw the soldiers, by his permission, plunder it of a khorore of Rupees *. The jewels, found there to an equal amount, were appropriated to his own use.

Mahommed Shaw, sensible that but half the work was done, whilst *Seyd Abdallah Khan* survived, immediately directed his march towards *Delby* ; declaring *Mahommed Amin Khan* Vizir, and *Kbondoran, Embir al Omrah*.

* One Million Sterling.

Abdallab Khan was not far from *Delly*, when an express from *Jieratt Khan* overtook him, advising him of the tragical death of his brother : he saw his own danger, and instantly dispatched a trusty officer with a party of horse to that city, with orders to return immediately with *Sultan Ibrahim*, younger brother of the Emperors, *Rassceil al Dirjaat*, and *Rassceil al Dowlat*. The officer executed his commission with great celerity ; and being returned with *Sultan Ibrahim*, *Abdallab* proclaimed that young Prince Emperor of *Indostan* : then putting himself at the head of a numerous army, he marched back to meet *Mabommed Shew*,

The two armies met the latter end of *October*, *Anno 1720*, and a bloody battle ensued. *Victory* stood doubtful a long time, so which side should give the day ; but when *Abdallab* was on the verge of snatching a certain conquest, a seasonable reinforcement turned the issue in favor of the Emperor : for during the heat of the engagement *Diababedr* (nephew of *Chivalram* Governor of *Eleabas*) arrived with a fresh body of troops ; these assaulting the rear and flank of *Abdallab's* army with the greatest intrepidity, a total defeat and rout soon followed. *Seyd Abdallab Khan* was taken prisoner ; the Emperor spared his life, in consideration

consideration of his owing him the crown he wore; but condemned him to perpetual imprisonment (as recited more minutely by *Mr. Fraser*) sequestering his vast possessions and wealth to his own use.

Thus fell the *Seyds Hossan Ali Khan*, and *Adallab Khan*, by a reverse of fortune too common to be very remarkable. The wonder is; that they should have maintained themselves so long (in this despotic and violent government) in a degree of absolute power and authority, hardly equalled in story; and that, during the reigns of five successive Emperors, four of whom they *themselves* had placed upon the throne.

The last decisive stroke put *Mahommed Shaw* into the quiet possession of the Empire of *Indostan*. A long peace ensued; and the Emperor gave a loose to the indulgence of his natural propensities, which centered only in the excessive use of wine, women, and hunting. To every thing else he became regardless: the reins of government in time slackened; confusion in the Empire followed: every *Omrah* was planning for himself; and none thought of the public. These universal disorders endangered, in consequence, the *health* and well-being

being of the state ; and paved the way for the invasion of the Empire by *Nadir Shaw*, in the year 1738 ; (so accurately investigated by Mr. *Frazer*) which was brought about by the intrigues of *Nizam al Mulluck*. This minister, after the reduction of the *Seyds*, was soon taken into favour, and confirmed in the government of *Deccan* ; or rather maintained himself there by his own strength, as an independant sovereign.

My readers will easily perceive, that in the foregoing recital I have followed the thread of Mr. *Frazer*'s concise narrative ; and have only deviated from him in those parts, where my materials afforded me fuller intelligence ; and in variety of transactions which he (obviously) thought lay out of the way of his *main object* : his intention being, very evidently, no more than to give a connected catalogue of the Mogulls from *Timur Lung* ; (*Tamarlam*) and at the same time to convey a slight view of the progressive state and condition of the Empire of *Indeflan*, as necessarily preparative to the period of *Nadir Shaw*'s invasion of it ; without embarrassing himself with any more of the particular circumstances attending the successions, than were consistent with, and immediately in point to
his

his design. All that I wish or hope for from *this* production is, that it may be esteemed an illustration only of that ingenious and learned gentleman's work ; comprised within the space, from *Auring Zebe's* demise, to the reduction of the *Seyds*.



C H A P. II.

*Transactions in the Subahdary of Bengal,
from the year 1717 to the year 1750,
inclusive.*

OUR present subject calls us back to the reign of *Furrukhsir*, when *Jaffir Khan*, an *Omrah* of great consideration and interest at court, ruled those provinces with a rod of iron. His name, to this day, is remembered with detestation; to fill his coffers, he inflicted the most cruel punishments on the *Rajabs* and *Zimindars*, by ways and means unheard of, and unknown, but in this Eastern government. He also highly oppressed the *Europeans* settled in these parts; yet, notwithstanding his very mal-administration, he had the address to obtain the governments of *Babar* and *Orissa*, united with that of *Bengal* in his person; which ever before had been distinct and separate Nabobships.

With

With this new acquisition of power, he removed from *Dacca*; which, until that time, had been the chief residence of the Soubahs, to *Morshadabad*; and this city now became the *capital* of the provinces.

Jaffir Khan had a favourite daughter, whom he married to *Soujah Khan*, a native of *Delhy* of some distinction; this person was appointed *Niab*, or deputy governor of *Orissa*, when *Jaffir Khan* changed the seat of his chief residence, and quitted *Dacca*.

Soujah Khan, by his marriage with the Soubah's daughter, had two sons born to him; the eldest named *Mahommed Tukbee Khan*; the younger *Suffraaz Khan*. The first had constantly resided with his father at *Cuttack*, the capital of *Orissa*, and the other, with his grandfather at *Morshadabad*.

Jaffir Khan's fondness for *Suffraaz Khan* was so prevalent, that when he obtained an order from court for *Soujah Khan's* succeeding him in the Soubahship; he procured at the same time *Suffraaz Khan* to be appointed King's Dewan of the provinces, in prejudice to the just pretensions of his elder brother, *Mahommed Tukbee Khan*.

This ill-judged mark of affection and preference in the old *Soujah*, was the cause of declared and unabating enmity between the two brothers; though *this effect*, probably without *that cause*, would have naturally resulted from the difference of their genius and dispositions; actuated by the different examples they had long before them, in the father, and grandfather.—*Soujah Khan* was bold; rigid in government; but, withal, complaisant and affectionate.—*Mahommed Tukkee Khan* was brave and generous; delighting in the exercises of a soldier, and the art of war.—*Jaffir Khan* was inveterate; avaritious; and a monster of cruelty.—*Suffraas Khan* was impetuous, overbearing and vindictive; and as he had been a stranger to contradiction from his infancy, so in his more advanced age, he could not bear it in the least degree, even from the mouth of wisdom.

Anno In the year 1725 *Jaffir Khan* deceased,
1725. to the general joy of the provinces; and *Soujah Khan*, hastening to the capital, took upon him the government. In the journey, he was accompanied by *Mahommed Tukkee Khan*.

When the brothers met, the embers of disgust and hatred, which had been only smothered by absence, now burst into a flame,

flame, that had well nigh consumed them both ; had not the prudence and authority of the Soubah interposed ; who, finding it impossible to accomplish a reconciliation between them, resolved to part them ; and immediately appointed *Malommed Tukbee Khan*, his Niab of *Oriffa* ; with orders, to set out the next day for his government. There in a few months he died universally lamented. His death gave his father the deepest sorrow ; for he loved him with a just and truly paternal tenderness.

On *Soujah Khan's* succession to the government, he released all the *Rajahs* and *Zemindars* that had been imprisoned by his father-in-law ; and eased them of sundry heavy taxes and impositions, that they had been loaded with. Calling them all before him, he enjoined them to attend carefully to the cultivation of their lands, and the improvement of the manufactures : assuring them that, in future, they should be exempt from the severities they had suffered under his predecessors : reminding them, that as they themselves had long felt the hand of oppression ; he depended it would be a lesson to them, not to oppress the *tenants* dependant on them. Then with a peremptory tone telling them, that if any were found deficient in their annual payments, their

lands should be taken from them, and given to others; afterwards he graciously dismissed them to their respect districts.

Soujab Khan taking into consideration the small standing force of the provinces, that until his time never exceeded the number of five or six hundred horse; determined to enlarge it to as many thousands, which he soon accomplished. He then made sundry regulations respecting the trade of the provinces, both inland and foreign; casting his eyes particularly on the *Europeans*; and attentive that they should not clandestinely partake of greater immunities and advantages, than the terms of their *Fbirmaunds*, or grants, gave them a title to.

To this end, he encreased the number of *Chowkee's* (or places for the receipts of customs) to twenty, upon the several rivers; whereas, before his government, there were only two; *Buxsh Bundar*, and *Azingunge*.

This wise and solid conduct, had it's natural and proper effects; the provinces soon wore a different face; commerce and manufactures flourished; and in a very few years he was enabled greatly to increase the royal revenue, and stipulate to pay into the royal treasury annually, one *Khorore*, one *Lac*, one thousand

and one hundred and one *sicca Rupees* ; over and above forty *Lacs of Rupees*, annually remitted to court, to different *Omrabs* residing there, on account of their *Jaghir* lands. In consequence, his interest at court was strengthened ; himself established in his government ; and the succession, by *grant*, secured in his family.

Anno.
1730.

Having brought the Soubah *Soujah Khan* to this happy and honourable period ; and given a general view of the state of these opulent provinces ; we next propose to trace the causes, circumstances, and progress of an extraordinary usurpation of this government, in the beginning of the year 1742.

Though the ambition, avarice, ingratitude, and violence of two artful *adventurers*, were the *seemingly* apparent causes of this usurpation ; yet, without other *co-operating incidents*, those (too common successful auxiliaries in the invasion of *right*) would have proved ineffectual.

The secret springs of the above-mentioned incidents, were known but to few ; and we venture to aver, were never put together before the penning of the manuscripts, A. D.

1750 ;

1750 ; alluded to in the preliminary discourse to this work ; from which manuscript the author of the Reflections, as before remarked, disingenuously took as his own, what he calls his “ Short sketch of the history of *Bengal*, from the year 1739 to “ the year 1750 *.”

Aliverdi Khan and *Hodjee Hamet*, were brothers ; natives of *Tartary* ; and followers of fortune. In this pursuit they arrived at the court of *Delhy*, about the year 1721 ; and put themselves under the protection of the then Vizir *Khondoran*. In their genius and qualifications they differed extremely. The elder, *Hodjee Hamet*, was of a cowardly, but deeply intriguing disposition ; well skilled in political learning ; and a profound judge of the nature of mankind. With *these talents*, he possessed not a single moral principle, capable of impeding *them* in their full career ; and therefore became every way qualified for the transactions of *this Eastern* (or indeed any other) court.

* For he recites the same chain of facts as they stand in the manuscript, with little variation, except the poor disguise of, here and there, a different mode of expression ; interspersed with a few *trite reflections*, which are *purely* his own. We thought this note highly necessary, lest we should incur the undeserved censure of retailing, at second hand, the labors of another.

Aliverdi

Aliverdi Khan was bold and daring ; bred to arms ; and skilled in all the duties of a soldier ; enterprising ; of ready understanding ; and naturally virtuous and honorable ; until these amiable qualities were perverted and subdued, by the instigations and evil counsels of his brother ; and his other talents were made subservient to *Hamet's* ambitious views of aggrandising their obscure family.

Hodjee acquired this title from his having in his early years made a pilgrimage to *Hodge*, (or the tomb of *Mahommed* at *Mecca*.) A duty which the *Kboran* imposes on every *Musselman* once in his life, either in person or by proxy ; and he who performs it in person, thereby obtains, for life, the honorary appellation of *Hodjee* ; and is much revered by the true believers.

It has been confidently asserted, and as currently believed in *Bengal*, that *Hodjee Hamet* had been preferred at *Delhy*, to the post of master, or keeper of the crown jewels : with the most valuable of which it was said he eloped, and afterwards sanctified this theft by a pilgrimage to *Mecca*. But, upon the strictest enquiry, we pronounce this report an aspersion of his enemies ; having the best authority for saying, neither
of

of the brothers appeared at court before the year 1721:—but the improbability of the fact speaks it a calumny—their original obscurity is allowed on all hands; can it then possibly gain credit, that either of them should be preferred to a post, which is usually bestowed on one of the first Omrahs of the Empire?

But if we should admit (what also has been asserted) that *Hodjee* was for a short space in the service of the *keeper* of the crown jewels; and might have it in his power to commit the theft alledged against him; yet the fact remains equally improbable: for can it be believed that after so atrocious a crime, both the brother should obtain the patronage and recommendation of *Khonloran*?—Which they certainly brought with them to *Cuttac* (the residence of the Nabob *Soujah Khan*) *Anno* 1722.

Anno
1722.

On their arrival, they were taken into the service of *Soujah Dowla*, as immediate attendants on his person: *Hodjee*, in capacity of his first *Kishmutgar* (or valet) and *Ali-verdi*, his *Cbilum Purduar* (dresser or rather keeper of his smoking pipe) with the additional pay and denomination of a seapoy, or foot soldier.

Their

Their rise from these menial stations was rapid, but not astonishing; in a country where superior talents ever make their way to speedy promotion.—The Nabob very soon discovered in *Hodjee* an extensive genius and understanding in men and things; and *Hodjee*, as soon found out the great, and almost only foible of his master; which was an ungovernable appetite for *variety* of women.

Hodjee benefited himself of this ruling passion; and by indefatigable attention and industry out-ran even the Nabob's desires.—The compiler of *the Reflections* says, *Hodjee* prostituted, “and made a sacrifice of “his own daughter to his master's lust:” we confess we never heard of it before; be this as it may, it is most certain that *Hodjee* by indulging and feeding this passion, quickly gained an ascendant over his master; and had the disposal of all places of small importance; and as he was observed to be the growing favourite, all suits and petitions were preferred through his mediation.

Aliverdi Khan's extraordinary military genius did not escape his master's notice. He was soon promoted to be *Jemmautdar* of the Nabob's foot guards; and not long
aft

after preferred to a command of horse, at the intercession of his brother.—The ruling passion of *Hodjee*, was an unbounded thirst of riches ; but whilst he labored to extend his influence over his master, as conducive to the satisfying this vice ; he was ever watchful and attentive, that his brother's interest went hand in hand with his own.

To these ends, he daily made himself more and more useful to *Soujah Khan* ; and being well versed in the arts of financing, and the invention of *ways and means*, his importance was confirmed : (this being the most useful and essential duty of a minister in the *East*, as well as in the *West*.) He was also an exquisite and penetrating *spy* upon the actions of all the *Niabs* and other officers employed under the Nabob ; with whom he secretly planted his own emissaries ; so that nothing was transacted in any part of the province of *Orissa*, that his master had not the most early intelligence of.—

The government of *Indostan* is perhaps the only government in the world, where the character of a *spy* is not attended, with reproach, and infamy : here it is honourable and dignified. The Emperor and all the *Soubahs* of the provinces entertain an officer

cer with this title, who is always a person of consideration ; but like *Satan* he is more generally feared than loved. *Hodjee* possessed not the title of the Nabob's *Hircarrab*, (spy) but he virtually was so ; and by this practice, did not a little gain upon his master's confidence, and thereby smoothed the way to designs, which about this time, *Anno* 1724, began to open upon him ; though he yet concealed them even from his brother.

The influence and power of the two brothers acquired new strength every day ; in such sort, that at the close of this year they had gained a full dominion over the actions and inclinations of the Nabob : who at this period succeeded to the government of the three provinces by the demise of the Soubah *Jaffir Khan*, as before recited in the former part of this chapter. The brothers attended him to the capital, where the scene of action became enlarged and more adequate to their different, though equally enterprizing spirits. *Hodjee Hamet* was soon declared prime minister ; and *Aliverdi* promoted to a command of horse of the first distinction.

Anno
1724.

Anno
1725.

The first judicious movements made by *Soujah Khan* on his coming to the Soubahshir

bahship, (already recorded) were, it was said the result of the salutary councils of *Hodjee Hamet*.—But if we admit the fact, let us not too hastily conclude that this advice flowed from any principle of affection to his master, or regard to his honor ; or from a commiseration of the suffering *Rajabs* : no, these worthy considerations were foreign to his heart, as appeared from the whole tenor of his future conduct. The moderate councils and measures adopted by the Soubah, raised the credit of the *minister* only, who (by reports of his emissaries dispersed about the city and country) had the sole honor of clemency ; strictly due to the Soubah's goodness of heart ; who always shew'd an aversion to the practices of his predecessor.

The minister by this artful procedure gained many friends ; and by secret stipulations with the enlarged *Rajabs*, he filled his own coffers, to the injury of the public revenue. In the degree that the minister gained credit and influence in the provinces—the Soubah sunk in the opinion of the people (a very natural consequence) and resting secure in the supposed integrity and extensive abilities of *Hodjee Hamet*, he abandoned *himself* to the full enjoyment of his *ruling passion* ; and the *government*, to the absolute disposal of the minister ; who with-
out

out controul, put in ; put out ; removed ; diplaced, and preferred to every post of profit, whomsoever he pleased. And by this traffic he soon acquired immense wealth : taking care to keep his master buried in sensuality ; still supplying the flame that had possession of him with fresh fuel ; ransacking the provinces, and obtaining (no matter at what price) the most beautiful women that could be procured to answer his purposes : and it was confidently (and we believe truly) said, that he carried his pandering so far, as never to appear at the Soubah's nocturnal levee, without something of this kind in his hand ; formed to attract and engage his attention.

Whilst *Hodjee Hamet* was thus employed in establishing his own power and fortune, and blinding the Soubah during the first three or four years of his government ; his brother *Aliverdi Khan* began to think himself neglected ; but *Hodjee* soon convinced him of his mistake.

Hitherto *Aliverdi* had not, in his own person, acquired any considerable lustre, except from the light thrown upon it, by reflection, from his brother's being the minister. In his military capacity he had indeed a few opportunities given him of shining
F
alone,

alone, both at *Oriffa* and *Bengal*; just sufficient to gain the belief of his being an intrepid officer: but now the time was come to bring his talents upon the stage in a more conspicuous view; an occasion offering, for which his brother had with impatience long waited.

And
1729.

Having for some time lost sight of the Soubah's only surviving son *Suffraaz Khan*, we here think it necessary to bring him to the remembrance of the reader, by a slight mention of him. His character has been already delineated: he possessed the post of King's *Dewan*, by appointment from court, and was successor apparent to the Soubahship: he had long looked with an evil eye on the growing power and influence of *Hodjee Hamet*, which he thought became pregnant with danger, both to his father and himself—but he had not the means of reducing it. The impetuosity of his temper burst forth sometimes in abuses, and in insults to the minister; who bore them with patient submission: but heavy resentment from the Soubah, against his son, always followed such abuse. The crafty *Hodjee* treasured them up in his memory, for a future reckoning; he daily instilled into the ears of the Soubah the many extravagancies his son was guilty of; which had too much truth

truth for their foundation ; but if that had not been the case, the Soubah was too ready to listen to any thing to his prejudice ; for he loved him not—ever saying, that his unbridled insolence occasioned the loss of his favorite and beloved son *Mahommed Tukbee Khan*.

Anno 1729, the Nabobship of *Patna* becoming vacant, *Hodjee*, without appearing in it himself, influenced the then reigning favourite mistress of the Soubah (who was deeply in his interest) to solicit it for his brother ; who was accordingly the next day nominated to that government. *Suffraaz Khan* upon this appointment, had the courage to tell his father in public *Durbar*, “ he was warming and cherishing two “ snakes, that would sting him and his family to death.” The Soubah ordered him immediately to be taken into custody ; but by *Hodjee*’s artful interposition he was appeased.

The following night, the brothers held a long and private conference ; to which several Rajahs and officers in their confidence were admitted.—Here the wicked plan of *Aliverdi Khan*’s government was settled, and he departed the next day for *Patna* ; where in a few days he arrived, and put in

execution the political maxims and instructions he had received from his brother. .

Anno
1724-25
1735.

The exploits of the first six years of his government—that is from the year 1729 to the year 1735, inclusive, were these following. By force, treachery, craft and policy, he subdued most of the *Rajabs* of the province of *Babar*; some, by the basest dissimulation and professions of friendship, he drew to *Patna*; were he murdered them and seized their possessions; as the brave *Sonder Shaw*, &c.—He then carried his arms against the *Chukwaars*, a brave and warlike *Gentoo* race, who possessed a tract of country opposite *Mongbeer*; up the river *Samboo*: the prince or *Rajah* of this country had never paid tribute, or acknowledged any subjection to the Soubahs of *Bengal*; or indeed to the Mogul himself. He laid every thing that passed on the river, by *Mongbeer*, under contribution; and put the *European* settlements to an annual heavy expence of a large armament, to escort their trade to, and from *Patna*.

The old brave *Rajah* of these people (who had many times fought hand to hand, with the intrepid commander of our troops, Major *Hunt*) deceased, in the year 1730; and was succeeded by his son, a youth of seven-

seventeen. This young prince, intimidated by the examples made of several of the *Babar* Rajahs, after a short resistance submitted; acknowledged allegiance to the Emperor; and subjection to the *Soubah*. An annual tribute was stipulated, and regularly paid for four years—a spot was fixed on, five miles from the mouth of *Samboo*, and thirty from the capital of the *Chukwaars*; where the prince every year met the *Nabob's* officer on a certain day: the one to pay, the other to receive the tribute; and it was agreed that they should have only thirty attendants on each side.

The twentieth of *October* (*Anno* 1735) was the day of payment; at which time the *English* army, under the command of commandant *Holcombe*, lay encamped in *Mongbeer* grove, with the company's trade for the *Patna* factory.—At eleven in the forenoon, we observed a boat, which had come out of *Samboo* river, making for *Patna*: the commandant dispatched two light *pulwaars* after her, with orders to bring her to—imagining she had a cargo of fish—the boat being brought to, and laid alongside the commandant's *budgerow*—~~timers~~, reader, our astonishment! when in place of a cargo of fish, it contained a

'cargoe of human *heads* ! five baskets full ;
and a single head in the sixth.

On enquiry, we learnt that before day break, the officer who was deputed to receive the annual tribute from the Rajah of the *Clukwaars* ; had, by orders from the Nabob *Aliverdi*, placed four hundred men in ambush, under the high banks of the river, near the place of meeting—that the prince and the Nabob's officer (Fowzdar of *Babar*, whose name we have forgot) with their usual attendants, met at nine of the clock ; and after the common ceremonies, and the tribute received, when they were just upon parting ; the signal being given, the troops in ambush rushed out, and surrounding the Rajah and his few followers, cut them off, one only excepted ; who upon a fleet horse escaped, and gave the alarm to the city—among those killed were his principal general officers.—We further were informed by the officer who had charge of the boat, that his orders were to make the best of his way to *Patna* ; and lay his freight at the Nabob's feet ; and that the head in the basket by itself, was the Rajah's—he added that the Fowzdar with his troops were in full march to the city *Samboo*.—This was soon after verified ; for we observed about four in the afternoon a
cloud

cloud of smoke over the city ; and the same evening we received these other particulars ; that on the first alarm and known fate of the Rajah, his wife, the young *Begum*, shut herself up with her son (about a year old) and her attendants, and set fire to her apartments—that the Nabob's troops meeting with no resistance, entered the city, plundered it, and then set fire to it.

A body of the Rajah's troops retired, and for some time disputed the possession of the country with the Nabob's ; but the Fowzdar being re-inforced from his camp, which then lay at *Durriapoor* ; a short march from *Mongbeer* ; the whole country was soon reduced, and these brave people subdued.

These were the *exploits* that rendered the name of *Aliverdi Khan* a terror to the neighbouring districts ; and by these, he amassed immense riches ; part of which he regularly remitted to *Morshadabad*, to preserve his own and brother's credit with the Soubah ; but the much greater part he reserved, for a purpose, he now had in agitation, by the pernicious advice of his brother.

Whilst *Aliverdi Khan* was carrying on these operations to establish his power,

Hodjee Hamet remained unrivalled in the administration of the Soubahship; but a transaction which now manifested itself, opened the Soubah's eyes.

Anno
1735.

Aliverdi Khan, forgetful of the duty and obligations he owed to his master, and urged by the continued persuasions of his brother, began about the beginning of the year 1736, privately to solicit at court for the government of *Patna*, and the province of *Babar*, independant of the Soubah of *Bengal*. This negotiation, however cautiously conducted, came to the knowledge of *Soujah Khan*. Rage on the instant took possession of him. *Hodjee* was disgraced, and for some time imprisoned—but by the most submissive and deceitful letters from *Aliverdi*, and the powerful intercession of the *Sergalic*, (*Hodjee's* never failing resource) the minister was enlarged, and *seemingly* again taken into favor.

Anno
1737.

Aliverdi did not slacken his negotiations on this discovery of his treachery; but availing himself of the favor of his patron *Khondoran*; and by well placed considerable bribes, he obtained, the latter end of the year 1737, a *phirmaund* and proper *funods* from court, constituting him independant governor of the province of *Babar*.

This

This confirmation of the ingratitude and treachery of the two brothers struck deeply to the heart of *Soujab Khan*. He had, however, the resolution and prudence to disguise his sentiments; knowing their power was too great to be attacked openly; or capable of being reduced by any weapons, but those of dissimulation and craft. By the assistance of these, he planned, and was just on the point of executing, a safe and certain revenge on both the brothers; when death put a period to his intentions.—It is more than probable, that *Hodjee*, who

Anno
1738.

His son *Suffraaz Khan* immediately succeeded his father in the government of *Bengal* and *Orissa*; as well as in his resentment to the brothers.

Independant power, only increased the bad qualities, which had already taken too deep possession of *Suffraaz Khan*: his excesses in spirituous liquors and women, were beyond controul and example; his insolence and impetuosity of temper became intolerable to all about him; his principal officers were treated with insults
and

and indignities : most of these had been disgusted with the family for the preference given to *Aliverdi Khan*, in the government of *Patna* ; though justice could not lay this charge against *Suffraaz Khan*.

There then resided at his court a *Gentoo* named *Allum Chund*, who had been many years *Dewan* to *Saujab Khan* ; by whom he was much revered for his great age, wisdom, and faithful services. This minister was the only man who had courage and honesty enough to attempt restraining the extravagances of *Suffraaz Khan* ; a duty he thought owing to the memory of his late master. He accordingly, with the greatest circumspection and humility, and with tears in his eyes, represented to him the fatal tendency of his conduct, which if not changed, must inevitably estrange the hearts of the few remaining friends to his house ; and at the same time favour and promote the evil designs of his enemies.

Suffraaz Khan, instead of profiting by this wholesome remonstrance and admonition, highly resented his presumption ; and ever after treated him with great indignities and contempt ; and thereby lost the heart of the only man in the provinces, who by his sincerity, capacity and authority, was
capable

capable of counteracting and frustrating the pernicious machinations of *Hodjee* and his brother.

Though *Suffraaz Khan* did not immediately degrade *Hodjee Hamet* from the post of prime minister; yet he took every opportunity of showing an inveterate hatred to him. In public Durbar he commonly called him by the appellation of, " His father's pander," and treated him with such insults and indignities, that he seldom frequented the Durbar; being ill able to brook such treatment in a place where he had for so many years been accustomed to a degree of deference and respect, equal to his master. Nor is it much to be wondered at, that he should meditate vengeance, when a fair occasion offered: this he was not long without; for *Suffraaz Khan's* own folly and rashness supplied him with the means, and gave him a nearer, and more encouraging prospect, of an *event* which he for some time past had in view.

A few months after *Suffraaz Khan* came to the government, he threw a disgrace on *Futtuab Chund's* house, which laid the foundation of his precipitate fall. The fact, though well known to a few, was only whispered, out of respect to the power and credit

Ann
1739.

credit of that family, which had maintained, even from the reign of *Auring Zebe*, a character of distinguished consideration; from *Furrukshir*, *Futtuab Chund* received the title of *Jaggaut Seet*; and might be justly esteemed the greatest banker, and most opulent subject in the world.

Anno
1739.

He had about this time married his youngest grandson, named *Seet Mortab Roy*, to a young creature of exquisite beauty; aged about eleven years. The fame of her beauty coming to the ears of the Soubah, he burned with curiosity and lust for the possession of her; and sending for *Jaggaut Seet*, demanded a sight of her.—The old man (then compleat fourscore) begged and intreated, that the Soubah would not stain the honour and credit of his house; nor load his last days with shame; by persisting in a demand which he knew the principles of his cast, forbid a compliance with.

Neither the tears nor remonstrances of the old man had any weight on the Soubah; who growing outrageous at the refusal, ordered, in his presence, his house to be immediately surrounded with a body of horse; and swore on the *Kboran*, that if he complied in sending his grand-daughter,
that

that he might only *see her*, he would instantly return her without any injury.

The *Seet* reduced to this extremity, and judging from the Soubah's known impetuosity, that his persisting longer in a denial, would only make his disgrace *more public*, at last consented; and the young creature was carried with the greatest secrecy in the night to visit him. She was returned the same night; and we will suppose (for the honour of that house) uninjured. Be this as it may, the violence was of too delicate a nature, to permit any future commerce between her and her husband.

The indignity was never forgiven by *Jaggaut Seet*; and that whole powerful family, consequently, became inveterate, tho' concealed enemies to the Soubah.

Hodjee Hamet soon came to the knowledge of this rash step and violence committed against the *Seets*; he was also well apprized of *Allum Chund's* disgust, and, as he was upon a friendly footing with them both, he determined to avail himself of their resentment, and make it subservient to his own intended vengeance for the repeated insults he had received from the Soubah. Revenge however was not his sole motive:
he

he was actuated by another, yet more prevalent one, the further aggrandising his family ; the hopes of which he had hitherto only seen at a distance ; but now thought the conjuncture favorable for carrying his long projected plan into execution : which was to cut off the son of his late *master, friend and benefactor* ; and place his brother *Ali-verdi Khan* in his stead.

Hodjee lost no time in procuring a private conference with the disaffected *Seets* and *Allum Chund* ; in the course of which he represented in the most lively manner, the
 “ oppression and extravagant government of
 “ *Suffraaz Khan* ; and, that nothing but the
 “ most deplorable consequences to the pro-
 “ vinces could be expected from such an
 “ unbridled and tyrannic disposition——
 “ that if he already treated with such in-
 “ sults and contempt, those for whom his
 “ father had the highest veneration and
 “ friendship—what might not others dread
 “ from his future violences ? ”——He then
 expatiated on, and with bitter exaggeration
 painted their own particular injuries ; which
 had all the effect upon them that he might
 naturally expect or could wish.

He suffered not their resentment to cool ;
 but supported this conference with many
 2 others :

others: and the unanimous conclusion of the triumvirate was; “ That none could
 “ be secure in their lives, honour or pro-
 “ perty, whilst *Suffraaz Khan* remained
 “ invested with the Soubahship.”—*Hodjee*
 managed the passions of these men with
 such art and address in the promotion of
 his own views——that they themselves
 first proposed, “ his brother *Aliverdi Khan*,
 “ as the only one capable of rescuing the
 “ provinces from apparent and inevitable
 “ ruin.—That he should be immediately
 “ advised of their sentiments, and intreated
 “ to concur with their hopes by preparing
 “ for a speedy march into *Bengal*, to take
 “ upon him the government.”

Hodjee, with expressions of gratitude for
 their favourable opinion of his brother, con-
 sented to their proposal with a well dissem-
 bled reluctance; declaring, “ nothing but
 “ the necessity of the time, and the peril
 “ of the country could have influenced
 “ him to meditate aught against the son
 “ of his late master.”

It being objected by *Jaggaut Seet*, that
 an intercourse by letter with *Aliverdi* was
 liable to accident and discovery; it was on
 further deliberation resolved, that *Hodjee*
 should repair to *Patna*, where he could better
 inform

inform his brother of the state of things, and benefit him by his council at this critical period: but as his sudden and private retreat from court would raise a suspicion in the Soubah, that something was in agitation against him, *Allum Chund* and *Jaggaut Seet* engaged to make his departure an act of the Soubah's own weakness.

The plan of operations being thus agreed on, their next step was to engage in the conspiracy the Soubah's *Tope Khonnab Derogher* (or master of his ordnance) with several other disaffected officers, which was very soon accomplished.——It was a saying of a great and brave king, “that one drop of honey caught and engaged more flies, than a ton of vinegar.” *Suffranz Khan*, in place of sweetness of disposition and affability, unhappily substituted a morose, severe and insolent carriage to all around him; which (at this most important juncture) left him not more than two or three officers of any consideration, who bore the least attachment to his person, family, or government.

Matters becoming thus ripe for execution, *Hodjee* began to grow impatient for an interview with his brother; and urged the promise

promise made to him by *Allum Chund* and *Jaggaut Sert*, of procuring his dismissal from the capital.

These embraced the first opportunity, when the Soubah was, according to custom, reviling *Hodjee* (then absent) in public *Durbar*; to represent to him, "that it was a disgrace to his court the suffering *Hodjee* to appear there, considering the infamous employ he bore under his father.—Drive him (continued they) from your presence, court, and city; and let him go to his ungrateful brother." This council being schoed and applauded by the *Tope Khonnab Derogher*, and others in the confederacy: the unwary Soubah instantly sent an order to *Hodjee Hamet* to quit the provinces; who, not thinking it prudent to wait for a second order, departed without delay; and made the best of his way to *Patna*, where in a few days he arrived with some of his faithful attendants.

Suffraz Khan, by this false step, deprived himself of the great security he had in his hands; for the good behaviour of *Ali-verdi Khan*, whose ambition, he had cause enough to think, would not stop with the Nabobship of *Patna*; depended upon the detention of *Hodjee*.

On *Hodjee's* arrival at *Patna*, he painted the whole conduct of the Soubah in the most hideous colours : he employed his whole art and eloquence in the exaggeration of the indignities himself had endured : he told his brother that he might rest assured “ *Suffraaz Khan* could never “ forget, nor forgive his obtaining the government of *Bahar*, independant of the “ Soubahship, whereby so large a portion “ of the revenues was lopt from himself “ and family : that he was from good authority convinced, the Soubah only waited a favourable occasion to cut him off, “ and seize and reunite his government to “ the Soubahship ; to which purpose he “ knew he had forwarded dispatches to “ court.—That he had gone too far to stop ; “ that *Suffraaz Khan* was universally detested in the provinces ; and finally that “ no security for himself and family remained, but in assuming the whole Soubahdary, which he might do with very little “ difficulty.”

Hodjee then opened to his brother, the progress he had made in this necessary step below ; recited the several conferences he had with the *Scets* and *Allum Chund*, and the result of their deliberations ; recounting
at

at the same time the names of the Soubah's officers, who had declared themselves wholly devoted to his promotion to the *throne*.

It was said ; *Aliverdi* expressed much compunction on this overture's being first made to him, to dispossess the son of his master and benefactor : but if we form our conclusion from his *Actions*, both antecedent and subsequent to this period, we shall have no foundation to encourage our belief in that report : for if he really had at first any scruples to combat with ; it is certain he very soon subdued them, and determined to march into *Bengal* ; of which, full advice was immediately dispatched to their confederate friends there.

It was however thought eligible, that *Suffraaz Khan* should be lulled into security ; to which end, *Aliverdi* (at the time he was levying additional troops) wrote the most submissive letter to him,—“ assuring
 “ him he was as much the slave of his
 “ house, as he was in the time of his
 “ father : humbly intreating his permission
 “ to throw himself at his feet, and plead
 “ the cause of his unfortunate brother ;
 “ who, he had with grief learned, had incurred his displeasure ; hoping by his
 “ per-

“ personal supplications, his unhappy brother would be restored to the Soubah’s favor *.”

He departed from *Patna* the latter end of the year 1741, at the head of about 30,000 horse and foot ; leaving his brother *Hodjee Hamet*, his *Niab*, or deputy governor of *Babar*. We will leave *Aliverdi* on his march, and return to the court of the Soubah.

Suffraaz Khan had still about his person three officers of distinction, that remained faithful to his interest——though from different motives : their names were *Mussat Khooli Khan*, *Goas Khan*, and *Banteer Ali Khan* ; (more commonly known by the name of *Baaker Ali Khan*.) The first, was married to a sister of the Soubah, and appointed Nabob of *Orissa* ; for which government he was in a few days to set out, with a small body of troops.—His interest connected him firmly to the Soubah, on whose well being his own fortunes depended.*

* This was the specious pretext publicly avowed for *Aliverdi*’s march into *Bengal*, which he began soon after the dispatch of the above letter, and before he could possibly receive any reply to it.

The

The other two had been proved faithful servants to *Soujub Khan* ; and were attached to the present Soubah, more from principles of gratitude, honor, and affection to the memory of their old master, than to any love they could possibly bear to himself—they supported the character of brave officers ; were in considerable commands under the Vice-roy ; and, in truth, were the only persons in his court, for whom he observed the least respect or regard.

These officers, after the departure of *Hodjee*, had received imperfect intelligence of the frequent meetings of *Hodjee*, *Jaggaut Seet*, and *Allum Chund* ; which they ventured to communicate to the Vice-roy : intimating, at the same time, their *opinion or sentiments*, that such meetings, composed of persons, which they feared were disaffected to his government, called for his attention ; and advised the immediate seizure of the *Seets*, *Allum Chund*, and the commanding officer of the artillery. But *Suffraaz Khan*, doomed to destruction ; hearkened not to these faithful admonitions, which he treated as idle apprehensions, without any real foundation ; thinking them friendly endeavours only, to draw him from his pleasures ;

G 3

which

which *these faithful monitors* had before attempted, but in vain.

By this fatal delusion, the Soubah lost the only opportunity of exerting that power which might have saved him from approaching ruin : for the bold step advised by *Goas* and *Baaker Khans*, of seizing those heads of the conspiracy, would have struck terror into the whole party ; and effectually put a stop to *Aliverdi's* intended invasion ; and probably a period also to his hopes.

Aliverdi Khan followed the letter he wrote the Soubah, with such expedition ; that he gained the pass of *Siclygully* ; and entered *Bengal* before the least intimation of his departure from *Patna* had reached the court of the Soubah.

The pass of *Siclygully* divides the provinces of *Bengal* and *Bahar* ; is of considerable length, and only about ten to twelve feet wide ; situate on the top of a mountain, with a steep ascent both ways. The course of the pass is *North* and *South* ; flanked to the *Westward* by an impenetrable wood ; and to the *Eastward* by the principal branch of the river *Ganges*. Thus circumstanced it was capable of being defended

fended by a small number of men ; but it was left unguarded by the infatuated *Suffraaz Khan* ; and without any defence at all.

Aliverdi knew the importance of this pass ; and therefore determined, by forced marches, to gain the possession of it, before it could possibly be put in a state of defence sufficient to oppose his entrance into *Bengal*. This he accomplished as above, and found it necessary to halt for some days to refresh his fatigued troops,

On the first advice that the Nabob of *Patna* had passed *Sichlygully*, the court of the Soubah was struck with the deepest consternation ; every one seeing further into the consequences of his approach, than the unhappy and short-sighted *Suffraaz Khan* : who having, at first, no conception, that *Aliverdi* was at the head of an army ; expressed only high rage and resentment at his daring to enter the province without his permission.—But when, soon after, *Gous* and *Baaker Khans* informed him of the number of troops he had with him—and that they were convinced (by intelligence from spies they had placed near his person) the design of *Aliverdi* was to depose him ; it is impossi-

ble to paint his fury.—He immediately sent for *Jaggaut Seet*, and *Ailum Chund*, and demanded of them; how they dared suffer such a body of troops to enter the province, without giving early notice of it? averring that he knew such a step was not taken without their privacy and counsel.

The accused, who expected this attack, came prepared: having previously concerted their replies, lest they should have been separately examined—They suffered the Soubah's rage to expend itself in words, and then submissively assured him “That
 “ had there been the smallest foundation
 “ for the belief of the reports falsely spread
 “ of *Aliverdi Khan*, they would have been
 “ the first of his slaves to advise him of
 “ his danger.—That the forces of *Aliverdi*
 “ were greatly exaggerated by some evil
 “ minded people near the Soubah's person,
 “ who were declared enemies to *Hodjee's*
 “ house. — That *their* intelligence (on
 “ which they could depend) said, he was
 “ only accompanied by his common attendants, and a small guard to defend
 “ him against the petty Rajahs, and freebooters of the mountains.—That they
 “ were themselves perfectly satisfied, the
 “ conduct

“ conduct of *Aliverdi* was greatly misre-
 “ presented ; and that his only design was
 “ to throw himself at the Soubah's feet,
 “ and plead the cause of his unhappy dis-
 “ graced brother *Hodjee Hamet*.”

To corroborate this specious and deceit-
 ful harangue, they each produced letters
 from *Aliverdi*, and from other seemingly in-
 different persons in his train, calculated pur-
 posely to support the deceptions ; which
 being compared with others, wrote to the
 Soubah from *Sichygully*, he was thereby
 again lulled into a stupid security ; and was
 influenced so far by the combined traitors,
 as to censure *Goas Khan*, and *Baaker Ali*
Khan ; as aiming to stir up troubles and a
 war in the province, that they might bene-
 fit themselves in the confusion.

We left *Aliverdi Khan* to the *Southward*
 of *Sichygully* pass, halting to refresh his
 troops after their fatiguing march.—Here
 he met with an impediment, that was well
 nigh making his whole schette prove
 abortive.

His principal *Jemmutdaars*, officers and
 soldiers, had been promised four months ad-
 vanced pay, (besides their old arrears) and

a gratuity of three Lacs of Rupees, as soon as they entered the province of *Bengal*.—The Jemautdaars, in a body, presented themselves before the Nabob; and demanded the promised pay and gratuity for themselves and their people; declaring if it was withheld from them, they would not march a foot further.

This demand threw *Aliverdi* into the utmost perplexity, as knowing his inability to comply with it. For, what with the large bribes remitted to *Delby*, for the purchase of his independant government of *Babar*; and what with other considerable sums just disbursed, to corrupt and keep firm the principal officers in the service of the *Soubah*; his coffers were drained, and at a very low ebb.

However, without discovering the difficulty he was under, he with his usual dignity, and a voice of authority, “ordered them to withdraw, and wait without, and they should be satisfied.”—Then calling a private *Durbar*, consisting of his Dewan *Chinkumunny*, and a few of his chief confidants; he informed them of the demand of his Jemautdaars, and represented in lively colours, “the risque
“ himself

“ himself and they ran, of being deliver-
 “ ed up to *Suffraaz Khan*, unless some
 “ expedient was devised to raise to the
 “ amount of three Lacks, with which he
 “ doubted not to quiet them for the pre-
 “ sent.” To this the Dewan replied, the
 whole sum in his hands did not exceed
 45000 Rupees; and that he knew of no
 means of raising more.—

This unfavourable report of the Dewan,
 proved a severe shock to *Aliverdi* and his
 adherents.—Various alternatives were (as
 usual in these cases) proposed, without any
 having the appearance of succeeding; :
 amongst the rest, it was strenuously urged
 by the Dewan, that an express should be
 sent to *Jaggaut Seet*; but this was opposed
 by the Nabob,—who asserted, “ such a de-
 “ lay would prove fatal to the whole en-
 “ terprize.”—And he was just on the point
 of resolving to retreat with those troops he
 could depend on; when the *evil genius* of
Suffraaz Khan, in the person of one of
Aliverdi’s followers, conciliated all matters
 by a device, which merits being particu-
 larly recited.

There were two brothers, merchants of
Patna, well known by the names of *Omy*
Chund,

Chund, and *Diep Chund*: the former of these now attended the camp, and was generally of *Aliverdi's* private councils; and much in his confidence.

One of the occupations of this *Omy Chund* was, to advance occasionally ready money to the officers and soldier at a very high premium; this is an allowed practice in all Eastern camps, and possibly, at least for aught we know, it may be the practice in the Western also——however, the greatness of the risque certainly justifies the largeness of the premium; for the repayment not only depends upon the lives of the borrowers, but also upon their success.

Omy Chund had brought with him only 20,000 rupees, for this game at hazard; he desired the Nabob would order his Dewan to pay him immediately the 45,000 rupees, which were in his hands; which being complied with, he instructed the Nabob,
 “ To call in the *Jemautdaars*——and
 “ order them to bring in an account of
 “ their respective claims, and to tell them
 “ that he would give them draughts on
 “ *Omy Chund*; taking care to give billets
 “ first to those who had the smallest sums to
 “ receive; and that in the close of the
 “ evening

“ evening he should (on pretence of fresh
 “ intelligence by his spies that *Suffraaz*
 “ *Khan* was in full march towards him)
 “ cause the *Nebut* to be beat, and issue his
 “ orders for engaging the enemy early in
 “ the morning, and leave the rest to him.”

The *Jemmautdaars* were called and ordered to bring in their claims, which they did in less than an hour: for they generally have them ready made up on a scrap of paper, which they conceal either in their girdle or turband. When all the claims were laid before the Nabob—he ordered his Dewan to give them billets upon *Omy Chund*; the Dewan, according to private instructions, made what delay he could, not to occasion suspicion; and gave those first who had the least to receive.

When the *Jemmautdaars* tendered their billets to *Omy Chund*, he paid several of the least considerable sums readily, and without any deductions: then, as he had accounts to settle with most of them, he prolonged the time by many artful blunders and designed errors, until the day was far spent, and not more than one eighth part of their accounts was adjusted. Then excusing himself on account of the great fatigue he had

undergone, he deferred the further payments until the next morning.

As soon as the day closed, *Aliverdi* ordered the *Nobut* to be beat; and issued out his commands to his *Jemautdaars* to hold themselves in readiness for engaging the next day; telling them that *Suffraaz Khan's* army was not far distant.

This unexpected alarm had the effect, which *Omy Chund* had foreseen: those who had received the amount of their billets, in all haste returned it into his custody; and the others deposited their billets in his hands. In the morning the Nabob resumed his march; took the rout to *Morshadabad*, and kept up the alarm and expectation of a battle; until he, in reality, encountered the Soubah; to whom we once again return.

Baaker Ali Khan and *Goas Khan*, receiving hourly intelligence from their spies of *Aliverdi's* motions, and the number of his forces, had still the courage to represent to the Soubah, the danger his person and government were in—and humbly besought him, “to provide for safety whilst in his power;” urging “that if the designs of *Aliverdi* were honourable, the most
“ eligible

“ eligible way to preserve him in those
 “ sentiments, was to let him see he was
 “ in a condition and posture to oppose and
 “ crush him. That if on the contrary the
 “ designs of *Aliverdi* were aimed against
 “ the government ; his supine conduct must
 “ inevitably secure his success. That from
 “ the face of *their* intelligence, and the
 “ whole procedure of *Aliverdi*, they had
 “ no room to doubt the wickedness of his
 “ intentions.”

These remonstrances joined to advices
 the Soubah had himself received of the
real number of *Aliverdi*'s troops; at last
 roused him from his stupor ; and he direct-
 ly ordered his Jemmautdaars and forces to
 take the field, and rendezvous in the plains
 of *Gyia*, about three miles to the North
 of *Morshadabad* ; himself following the next
 morning. He had hardly time to marshal
 his troops in order of battle, when *Aliver-*
di's army appeared.

Their forces was nearly equal ; each about
 30,000 men ; 20,000 foot, and 10,000
 horse. *Suffraaz Khan* had twenty pieces
 of artillery, from twelve to six and four
 pounders : *Aliverdi* had none.

Suffraaz Khan planted his cannon in his front; with strict orders not to fire, until the enemy advanced within half musket shot; for confiding on his artillery, he rested secure of victory—*Aliverdi* ordered his troops to receive the discharge of the cannon, and then to rush in upon the Soubah's army sword in hand. He issued these orders with great security; for he and his troops knew that by the treachery of the *Tope Khonnab Droger*, the cannon were loaded with powder only. He also issued his instructions to his officers, to regard nothing but attacking those posts, which were commanded by *Mussat Khooli Khan*, *Baaker Ali Khan*, and *Goas Khan*: well knowing that none of the Soubah's troops or officers would engage, but those which were immediately under their command.

When the engagement began, all but five or six thousand of the Soubah's troops stood idle spectators of the battle. *Aliverdi's* best troops advanced without the least apprehension; stood the discharge of artillery; and vigorously attacking the division of *Baaker Ali Khan*, (behind which the Soubah was stationed) they were twice repulsed with much slaughter: but *Baaker Ali's* troops being overpowered by fresh numbers,

bers, this brave man was killed; and more of his party cut to pieces.

Goas Khan penetrating to the center of the enemy, with a few brave followers, was near killing *Aliverdi* with his own hand; when *Sedun Hazzary*, commander of his *Burkundasses*, interposed and saved him; obliging *Goas Khan* to retire with his command; who, soon after being surrounded by *Aliverdi*'s troops, and disdaining to receive quarter, were to a man killed.

Muffat Khooli Khan, and the troops under his command, for some time exerted themselves with great courage and fidelity in defence of the Soubah's person; who being now, for the first time, informed of the treachery of the *Tope Khonnab Droger*, and the defection and perfidy of most of his officers and troops; and that he was betrayed on all hands; and learning also the fate of his two faithful generals——he ordered “ *Muffat Khooli Khan* to retire from the battle; to make the best retreat he could to “ *Cuttack*; and save, if possible, the province of *Orissa* from the traytor and “ usurper *Aliverdi*,” telling him “ he saw “ it was vain for him alone to attempt “ stemming the current of his adverse for-

fortune." *Muffat Khooli Khan* obeyed, and with a small faithful party retired, and eluded the pursuit of the enemy.

The Soubah, thus abandoned, determined, it should seem, to efface by a glorious death the remembrance of his inglorious life.—At this juncture it was, that the leader of his elephant proposed to him to return to the capital, "telling him that he would engage, on the forfeiture of his head, to convey him safe thither, where he had still some friends that would be able to make a stand for him;" but he nobly replied, "It never should be said that *Suffraaz Khan* fled from rebels and traitors." He then ordered him to plunge into the thickest of the enemy; where, with a few of his guards, that still remained steady to him, he for some time maintained an obstinate engagement—like an enraged lion he fought to a degree of desperation: it was said he emptied a whole quiver of arrows; and discharged more than a dozen javelins; besides the execution he did with the fire arms he had with him, on the elephant. But at last being weary with slaughter, and not able any longer to lift an arm, a period was put to his life and fortune, by a musket ball from a distance; said to be discharged

discharged by one of his own people. With this wound he fell dead from his elephant; and with his death the contest ceased.

Thus fell the son of *Soujah Khan*, testifying by his exit from life, that he possessed a soul capable of producing great actions, had the soil been early and properly cultivated.

Alivardi Khan possessed himself of the late Soubah's tent and baggage; the plunder of which, amounting to between nine and ten lacs of rupees, he bestowed upon his principal officers and soldiers—He received *Suf-fraaz Khan's* perfidious officers and soldiers into his service; and marching to the capital, entered it without resistance through the acclamations of the people. Proceeding to the palace, he seated himself upon the *Muxtnud*, and received the submission of the Rajahs, Jemmutdaars, and other great officers, who acknowledged and saluted him Soubah of the *Three provinces*.

Anno
1742.

The fate of one of the three principal conspirators; having something remarkable in it, calls for our particular mention.—

Allum Chund returned from the investing *Alivardi* to his own house; and being bit-

terly reproached by his wife, for his perfidy and treason to the son of his prince and master, and predicting "that he would shortly receive from the *usurper* the reward due to every *traitor*," he was thereby so much affected, that he swallowed diamond powder, and in a few hours expired.

Aliverdi Khan entertaining no favourable opinion of the military prowess and capacity of the *Bengal* soldiery; and having so very lately seen a glaring proof of their natural perfidy, as well as cowardice, in the unhappy fall of his predecessor, determined to put no trust or confidence in them: and in order to guard against their treachery, which he knew might be easily purchased against him, as it had been for him, he entertained immediately in his service a select body of three thousand *Patans*, with their commander *Mustapha Khan*, a soldier of fortune; who about this time arrived in *Bengal* with recommendatory letters from court. He bore the character of a consummate general; and his subsequent actions verified the report.—These new troops the *Soubah* kept always on duty near his person; and their chief was admitted to his councils and favour.

His

His next step was to displace all officers, throughout the provinces, that he had reason to think retained any affection to the late Soubah's house: and when he thought himself secure against all attempts that might endanger his newly acquired government, he appointed a Niab *pro tempore*, for the government of *Babar* and its capital; and recalled his brother *Hodjee Flamet*, that he might benefit himself of his counsel, and assistance. in his arduous situation.

Hodjee being arrived, all matters were debated and concerted relative to the government of the provinces: *Hodjee* was invested with the government of *Morshedabad*, in the absence of his brother; who without delay took the field, and directed his rout towards *Orissa*, on the thirtieth of *March*, 1742 *.—We will leave the Soubah on his march, and for a few minutes attend on the Nabob of *Orissa*.

This fugitive, and unfortunate brother-in-law, to the late Soubah, (with whom I was

* *Suffraaz Khan's* defeat and death was on the twenty-eighth of *January*, 1741-2, and not on the thirtieth of *March*, 1742, as the author of the *Reflections* erroneously says, confounding the date of one event with another.

intimately acquainted) escaped from the battle with a few followers, as before recited. He in a few days reached the capital of *Orissa*, where many of the friends of *Suffraaz Khan's* house resorted to him: he made some attempts to fortify, and enlist troops for the defence of the place: but being ill supplied with cannon and ammunition, and receiving certain intelligence of the usurper's approach, with a very superior force to his own; he thought it prudent to provide for his own safety, by retreating out of the province with his family. He left *Kuttack* four days before the *Soubah's* van-guard reached it; and found an asylum in the *Deccan*, under *Nizzam Al Mulk*.

Kuttack opened its gates to the Usurper; but he had scarcely settled the government of *Orissa*, when he was alarmed with the news, that an army of 80,000 *Mabarattor* horse had entered the province of *Bengal*, by a passage over the *Bierboheen* hills; and had already penetrated into the *Burdmaan* country.

The Usurper received this unexpected shock with manifest astonishment: he immediately saw, not only his retreat, but every communication with his brother and his

his capital cut off. In this dilemma we will leave him for a while, and investigate as well the causes of this invasion, as convey some idea of the people called *Maharattors*; who for a few years last past, have been as much the dread and terror of the East, as the *Goths* and *Vandals* of old were of the West: with this essential difference however in their characters, that whereas *these* were the barbarous invaders of the rights and property of others; *these* are making justifiable efforts to recover *that*, which their ancestors had been, for ages, in peaceable and just possession of.

When the Empire of *Indostan* was invaded; and, in part, conquered by the Mogul *Tartars*, about the beginning of the fifteenth century: many of the Rajahs, or *Hindoo* princes of the country, submitted with little opposition to the invaders, on condition of holding their lands and principalities, paying a stipulated annual tribute. But others of them, disdaining this tributary state of slavery, retired to the southward; and possessing themselves of the most southern parts of *Deccan*, they remained unmolested, until about the year 1654; the latter end of the reign of the Emperor *Shaw Jehann*.

His third son *Auring Zebe*, being at that period *Soubah*. of the *Deccan*, (or south) made a fruitless attempt on *Golconda*; instigated thereto by *Mbir Jemla*, who revolted to him from the then reigning *Rajah* of that famous city, and the adjoining country.

Auring Zebe, succeeding to the throne of *Indostan*, in the year 1659; pursued by his Generals his former designs against the independant *Rajahs*, on the coast of *Cormandel*; being guided chiefly by the counsel and instructions of *Mbir Jemla*; by whose valour *Golconda* was reduced; and the whole coast subdued, from *Ganjam* to *Coleroon* river, that is, from the latitude of $11^{\circ}. 40'$ to $19^{\circ}. 30'$ north.

The other promontory of *India*, called the coast of *Mallabar*, from the borders of the province of *Guzerat* to cape *Comorin*, was never conquered by the Mogul Emperors: but the independant possession of it, was maintained by various *Rajahs*; the chief of whom was the *Rajah* of *Sittarab*.

To these independant princes, the distressed and dispossessed *Rajahs* of *Cormandel* applied for succour. They, alarmed at the

the rapid progress of the Mogul arms, immediately united themselves under the banners of the Rajah of *Sittarah*.

These united princes and people, are those which are known by the general name of *Mabarattors*; a word compounded of *Rattor* and *Maabab*: the first being the name of a particular *Raazpoot* (or *Rajpoot*) tribe; and the latter, signifying *great* or *mighty*; (as explained by Mr. *Frazer*) a term we have had occasion to make use of before; and frequently shall again.

The acquisitions thus gained to the Empire, by the Generals of *Auring Zebe*, cost so much blood and treasure, that the diamond mines of *Golconda* hardly proved an equivalent: for the confederate princes made such vigorous efforts to regain what they had lost, as obliged *Auring Zebe* to keep up so large an armament, that the expence of preserving his new conquest exceeded the whole revenues acquired by it. The glorious vanity, however, of having carried his conquests of this Empire further than any of his predecessors, determined him not to abandon them; until finding at last, he should risque the loss of the whole, he began to meditate coming
to

to a treaty with them : which resolution was hastened by several bold attacks, made on different parts of his dominions by the *Mabarattors* at the same time.—On the side of his new southern acquisitions, they carried fire and sword sometimes into the province of *Dowlatabad*; and attacked the capital *Aurangabad*; and from *Sittarab* they penetrated through the province of *Guzerat*; and sometimes alarmed even the court of *Delby*; striking a panick wherever they came.

Auring Zebe, seeing, at length, no prospect of extending his conquests farther over these intrepid natives; thought it a wise measure to secure, and keep if possible, what he had got.—To this end, he entered into a treaty with the confederate Rajahs; and by a secret valuable consideration given to the *Seboo* Rajah, King of *Sittarab*, a peace was concluded between them on the following terms. “ That
 “ *Auring Zebe* should remain in quiet
 “ possession of his southern conquests as
 “ far as the river *Coleroon*, before mention-
 “ ed, and the port of *Surat*; and that in
 “ lieu thereof, the *Mabarattors* should re-
 “ ceive, and be intitled to, for ever, a
 “ *Chout* (that is, the fourth part) of the
 “ reve-

“ revenues of *Deccan* ;” to which *Soubabship*, these new southern conquests were annexed by the Emperor.

Thus a period was put to a war, that had chiefly employed the attention, of near two thirds of *Auring Zebe*'s long and fortunate reign ; by which, so important an addition of territory and revenue was obtained, that had it been duly and honestly governed and administered ; and the treaty kept inviolate on both sides, would have yielded a perpetual source of riches to all succeeding Emperors, on every emergency of the state.

* As long as *Auring Zebe* lived, the *Choliz* was duly paid to the *Mabarattors* ;, but on his decease the treaty began to be infringed, though it suffered no open rupture until the death of *Shaw Allum* ; when the Empire falling into a state of universal confusion, (by the contentions that arose between his sons for the succession to the throne, and by the subsequent distractions during the despotic tyranny of the *Seyds*) little regard was paid to it, on the part of the government.

Things being in this situation, the *Mabarattors* determined to pay themselves ; by
making

making incursions on different sides of the Empire; and laying the city of *Surat* under contribution: in which warfare they met with such success from the continued pusillanimity and distraction of the government, that at length, they extended their claim and demand, from the stipulated *Chôût* of the revenues of the *Deccan*; to a *Chôût* of the whole revenues of the Empire.

However, when *Mahommed Shaw*, by the overthrow of the *Seyds*, arrived to the secure possession of the throne, *Anno* 1719; some check was put to their invasion: and terms of accommodation being made to them, they for some years acquiesced in the terms of *Auring Zebe's* treaty; and annually received the *Chôût* of the revenues of the *Deccan*, by their agents out of the royal treasury at *Delhy*; long after these revenues had lost their way to court, by the usurpation and independance of the traitor *Nizam al Mulk*.

In the year 1740, the deputies of the King of *Sittarab*, arrived as usual at *Delhy* to receive the *Chôût*; when they were given to understand by the *Mogul's* ministry, "That "*Nadir Shaw* had lately so exhausted the treasury, that the Emperor was rendered utterly

“terly incapable of satisfying their demands :
 “the more especially, as the revenues of
 “the *Bengal* provinces had been withheld
 “from the year 1738, by the rebellion of
 “*Aliverdi Khan* ; who in conjunction with
 “his brother *Hodjee Hamet*, had usurped
 “the government of that *Soubahdary* : they
 “requesting at the same time that the de-
 “puties would intreat their master in the
 “Emperor’s name, to send an army of suf-
 “ficient force to exact the amount of the
 “*Chakut*, that was due to them ; and also to
 “take the heads of *Aliverdi* and his bro-
 “ther ; and restore the family *Soujab Khan*
 “to the *Soubahship* ; as the then distracted
 “state of the Empire put it out of his power
 “to send a force, strong enough, to reduce
 “the two rebels.”

With this answer, and *actual powers* from
 the *Emperor*, the deputies departed for *Sit-
 tarah*.—A fact that fully confutes the asser-
 tion of *Aliverdi*’s having received a *Phir-
 maund*, confirming him in the government ;
 as was published by beat of drum, and in-
 dustriously circulated by the *Seets*, the latter
 end of the year 1739 *.

The

* *Aliverdi* is reported to have sat in state a whole
 day to receive the *Sham Phirmaund*, with the usual cere-
 monials

The *Mabarattor* deputies arriving at *Sittarab*, reported the result of their deputation, and the Emperor's request. The King of *Sittarab* did not ruminate long what resolution to take: he now had obtained a justifiable plea to attack the Mogul's dominions with his own consent; therefore, without loss of time, he ordered an army of 80,000 horse to take the field, and march into *Bengal*; under the command of *Boschar Pundit*, a general of some reputation, and favorite of the *Seboo Rajah* King of *Sittarab*. This general, and army, we left in the *Burdomaan* country between the usurper and his capital; to whom we

monials on such occasions; but this is a farce that has been since played in some parts of the province of *Bengal*, and laughed at, as much as it was then.—For the *Seets* could always cook up a *Phirmaund* from court when ever it was wanted. That *Aliverdi* was never confirmed in the government by a real *Phirmaund*, is a fact that admits of no doubt; and it is well known, that so late as *June, Anno 1750*, the *Vizir Monsoor Ali Khan*, (father of *Soujeb Dowlat*, the present *Soubah of Oude*) was advanced at the head of 100,000 horse, within eight days march of *Patna*, purposely to restore these so long dismembered provinces to the Empire, and punish the usurper:—but differences arising between the young Emperor *Amet Shaw*, (son and successor to *Mahomed Shaw*) and *Rajah Jeet Sing*, the *Vizir* was recalled from this service; or, as others more probably said, his retreat was bought off by *Aliverdi*, at the price of fifty Lac of Rupees.

must

must again return ; and point out the errors that drew him into the perilous situation and dilemma we left him in, before we shew how bravely he extricated himself from it.

Some short time before he departed from *Morshadabad*, a slight rumour prevailed of the intended invasion of the *Mabarattors* ; to which no credit was given, either by the usurper or his brother. But slight as the report was, it ought to have merited their attention at a juncture when he was departing with all the strength of the provinces to the most extreme part of his government : and as he must have known, no enemy could enter the province of *Bengal*, so as to cut off his communication with his capital, but by the western hills of *Bierbobeen* ; prudence dictated that he should have secured the fidelity of the Rajahs of *Bierbobeen* and *Bisnapore* ; who were alone capable of harrassing and retarding, if not of preventing the *Mabarattor* army from entering on that side.

But (as if Fortune had purposed, that the neglect of this wise precaution should be conducive to the higher exaltation of the character of this her favorite son) so far
were

were the brothers from adverting to the necessity of such a security in their rear, that both these Rajahs had been highly incensed by some acts of oppression exercised towards them soon after *Aliverdi's* usurpation of the government; and were readily disposed, in place of obstructing the enemy, to give them a free entrance into the heart of *Bengal*; which they did without the least opposition: though in pursuing their resentment, they entailed a long series of heavy calamities on their unhappy country.

We left *Aliverdi Khan* at *Cuttack*, in deep astonishment at the news of this dangerous invasion. Without discovering the least apprehension or alarm, he withdrew for the space of half an hour; in consultation only with *Mustapha Khan*: and then ordered his people to prepare for marching. He quitted *Cuttack* the same day; and by forced marches arrived near *Burdwan*, the principal town of *Burdomaan*; (within five days march of the capital) two days after the *Maharattors* took possession of it. Here he intrenched himself; and was soon surrounded by the enemy; who though they had at least the superiority of eight to one, had not the courage to attack him.

Boschar Pundit, however, sent *Alpoerd* a letter; explaining the nature of the powers he was invested with; demanding "three years arrears of the *Ebott*; the "treasures of the two late *Soubahs*; and "that in future, an officer of their own "should have a seat in every *Cutcherry* "throughout the provinces; "to collect the "fourth part of the customs, on their be- "half."

The usurper received these terms with the highest indignation and impatience; instantly commanding the messenger to leave his camp, without desiring to send any reply to them: and finding by the propositions made to him, that there remained small hope of effecting any accommodation with the *Mabattator* General, he determined to make one vigorous effort, to break through the enemy, and regain a communication with his brother. To this resolution he was stimulated, by observing an universal panic amongst his *Bengal* troops, many of which deserted him, by favour of the night.

In pursuance of this resolution, he issued the necessary orders; omitting nothing that could speak the consummate General; pro-
I mising

giving most liberal rewards to those who maintained, in this exigency, the character of soldiers: and well judging that his principal dependance rested upon the *Patans*, he bestowed the highest encomiums and promises on that body; by whom he began to be loved and revered; for being themselves brave, they admired those intrepid qualities in *Aliverdi*, which so nearly resembled their own.

All things being prepared, the usurper directed that part of the trench to be levelled with the utmost silence, which looked towards *Cutwab*. Then putting himself with *Muslapka Khan* at the head of the *Patans* half an hour before day break, he marched out; and with amazing courage charged that part of the enemy that intercepted his rout towards the last mentioned town.

His rear being composed entirely of his *Bengal* troops, (then esteemed the worst soldiers of the Empire) was soon surrounded and put to flight; but the *Patans* exhibited a glorious effort: these led on (as before observed) by the *Soubab*, and their gallant chief *Muslapka*; and their rear commanded by the brave *Zeyndi Amet Khan*,

Khan, (Hodjee's second son) with much slaughter cut themselves a passage through the enemy; and gained the *Cutwab* road: In the course of which, they maintained a most memorable retreat for near three days and nights: being often surrounded and attacked on all sides, by the whole *Maharattor* army, and as often repulsing and forcing their passage until they arrived at *Cutwab*.

At this place the usurper mustered his troops, and found that of 25,000 fighting men, with which he departed from his capital, he had only remaining 2500 *Patans*; and about 1500 of his *Bengal* soldiers, including their officers: these last named troops, stimulated by the example of the *Patans*, and the intrepid behaviour of their *Jemautdaar Jaffier Khan**, were kept firm to their duty.

At *Cutwab*, *Aliverdi* found it necessary to halt for a short space to refresh his harassed troops; who, during the term of this astonishing retreat, had in a manner been strangers to food; rest; or sleep.—Here

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* Since better known by the name of *Mbir Jaffier Ali Khan* Soubah of *Bengal*.

they were again surrounded on all sides, except on that of the river; which *Aliverdi* was informed was in one place fordable; a circumstance unsuspected by the enemy.

It was now universally believed that the usurper must surrender himself, or be cut to pieces with the few that remained with him. And indeed a report ran through the province that he was actually taken prisoner; but the actions of this handful of men, in their retreat from *Burdwan*, had struck such terror and amazement into the whole *Mabarattor* army; that they gazed upon them as so many enraged tygers in a net, without daring to approach the toils that enclosed them; and contented themselves with the prospect of starving them to a surrender; little dreaming that *Aliverdi* would attempt fording the river, with people nearly exhausted by continued labour and watching.

The usurper taking advantage of this visible panic in the enemy, and unwilling to let the triumphant ardour of his own soldiers cool; resolved to attempt the river without further delay: and knowing there was a defile leading from the village to the river, through which the enemy might intercept

tercept his passage, he judged it necessary to secure it; thereby also to prevent his rear's being attacked before they could gain the river.

The defence of this dangerous post was given to *Mustapha Khan*, supported by *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, and *Jaffier Khan*, with eighty select *Patans*; who immediately departed to take possession of the *Defile*—As soon as they were posted, *Mustapha Khan* dispatched a messenger to the Soubah to advise him, he might attempt the river whenever he pleased.

Aliverdi having previously made the necessary dispositions, put himself at the head of the *Patans*; and gave the signal for marching to the river; which they entered without molestation, preceded by well instructed guides.

As soon as the enemy perceived him in motion, they instantly attacked the *Defile* with great violence; hoping still to circumvent him.—They at first seemed to deride and despise the small number left for the defence of it; but soon found their error, in repeated repulses with heavy slaughter; from this determined, though small body of men:

each of their leaders, on this momentous occasion, giving proofs of valour worthy the greatest heroes of antiquity.

They maintained their post, for a full hour, against reiterated attacks of fresh troops; without giving the least way; and until they judged the Soubah had safely past the river. They then began to retreat by slow degrees through the *Defile*, without turning their backs; and having gained about the middle part of it*, advice was brought to *Muslapa Khan*, that his rear was attacked by the enemy†.—This general, without hesitating a moment, committed the charge of his front to *Jeyndee Amet Khan*, and *Jaffier Khan*: and ordering the forty men that composed his rear to face about, he put himself at their head, forming two fronts to oppose the enemy; and sending orders to *Jeyndee Amet* to continue his retreat, he bravely charged his new antagonists, and forced them to retire with much loss. When the whole party

* The *Defile* was about eighty yards in length and ten wide.

† This event happened thus—a body of the *Maharatters*, about one thousand men, forced an entrance into the town, and had made a fruitless attack upon *Aurang's* rear, as they passed the river, from which they were now returned.

had cleared the *Defile*, he commanded his men to form in one line on the shore, with their backs to the river; and making a feint to give a general assault; the enemy, as he expected, was struck with terror, and retired many paces. *Mustapha* taking advantage of their distance, instantly commanded his troops to face about and take the river; into which they plunged, and gained the opposite shore, with the loss, on the whole, of only fifteen men.

If we consider the retreat of these Veterans (from *Burdwan* to the opposite shore of *Cutwah* river) in all its circumstances; it will appear as amazing an effort of human bravery, as the history of any age or people have chronicled; and we think it merits as much being recorded and transmitted to posterity, as *that* of the celebrated *Albenian* general and historian.

Mustapha Khan, *Jeyndee Amet Khan*, and *Jassier Khan* were received by the Soubah, with all the marks of the highest affection and esteem. He bestowed great encomiums on the valour of *Jassier Khan*, who was ever after distinguished by his favour. He saluted, and thanked by name, every one of the *Patans*, who fought under these commanders

manders at the memorable defence of the *Defilè*: and having refreshed his troops, proceeded on his march to the capital, where he was received with astonishment and reverence. His first acts were, to present *Mustapha Khan* with ten lac of rupees; and proportionably to reward the rest of his brave defenders,

Whilst the usurper was gaining everlasting renown as a soldier, his brother *Hodjee Hamet* was employed in putting the city of *Morshadabad* in a posture of defence. With extraordinary expedition he sunk a ditch round it; formed a rampart and parapet; and planted cannon in those parts where the city was most open to the enemies attacks.—*Aliverdi* reproaching him; “with having abandoned him to the enemy; and with being solicitous only for his own safety; by neglecting to send a body of troops to favour his retreat”—*Hodjee* replied, “that concluding (from the number of the enemy, his forlorn situation, and the repeated reports of his being taken prisoner and killed) he was no more; he thought it more advisable to strengthen the city, than to weaken the defence of it, by parting with any of the few forces he had been able

“ to raise for its preservation.” And in truth, *Aliverdi* found it in a much better state of defence than he expected.

Before the usurper had set out on his expedition for the reduction of *Orissa*, he had sent orders to his deputy governor of *Patna*, to levy troops in the province of *Babar*. But these forces being not yet arrived in *Bengal*, he was, to the great mortification of his enterprising and military genius, reduced to the necessity of shutting himself up in his capital; and was employed in providing further for its security.

The *Maharattors* recovering from their consternation and panic, and acquiring a better knowledge of the river, passed it with their whole force; advanced to *Morshadabad*; and surrounded it without attempting to assault it. They detached parties into the environs; plundering and destroying wherever they came; they sent some bodies of horse into the island of *Cossimbuzar*; who committed there the most horrid devastation and cruelties: they fed their horses and cattle with mulberry plantations; and thereby irreparably injured the silk manufacture; in short, after committing every hostile

hostile act, which plenitude of power licensed without molestation ; they thought it at length prudent to retire with their plunder ; lest the approaching rainy season (which sets in, annually, about the middle of *June*) should intercept their retreat.

June
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With this necessary precaution they quitted the blockade of the city, and repassed at *Cutwah* early in *June*, 1742, with all their immense plunder.

From *Cutwah*, they penetrated through the *Burdomaan* country ; detaching their parties into every district ; still amassing greater booty, and striking universal terror round them ; sometimes alarming even the *European* settlements. The rains at length setting in, about the middle of *June*, gave a flattering hope that the land would soon be delivered from these devouring locusts. But alas ! this pleasing prospect had but a short duration ; they retired it is true ; and bent their rout towards the *Bierboheen* hills ; irresolute whether they should quit the provinces entirely ; or only lodge themselves in convenient quarters in that high country ; where they would be ready to commence a new scene of destruction as soon as the rains broke

broke up (which they generally do about the latter end of *September* or the middle of *October*.)

It was by most believed that the enemy had taken their departure for their own country ; and it is certain they had formed that resolution : when on a sudden, to the utter amazement of all, *Boschar Pundit* issued orders to march into *Bengal* ; — so his ill destiny prompted him, that he might by his fall pay a sacrifice for the cruel enormities committed on all ranks, by those under his command.

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They returned about the latter end of *July* ; and pitched their tents on the highest parts of the *Burdomaan* country ; and settled themselves there for the remainder of the rainy season.

On this event, a general face of ruin succeeded. Many of the inhabitants ; weavers ; and husbandmen fled. The *Arungs* were in a great degree deserted ; the lands untilled ; and the wretched fugitives who had escaped with nothing but their wives and children, and whatever they could carry in their hands, thought there was no safety for them, until they arrived on the *Eastern* shore
of

of the *Ganges*; to which they flocked in shoals, without intermission for many days together.

The manufactures of the *Arungs* received so injurious a blow at this period, that they have ever since lost their original purity and estimation; and probably will never recover them again. But it is necessary we explain what influenced *Boschar Pundit*, to take the extraordinary and unexpected step above-mentioned.

There was an officer employed in the receipts of the revenues at *Dacca*, named *Mbír Hubbeeb*, who had embezzled a considerable sum; and had otherways been guilty of mal-administration in the execution of his trust. This man had been ordered, soon after *Aliverdi's* seizing the government, to repair to the capital, and render an account of the branch committed to him.—He was bold and enterprising; of solid judgment; minutely acquainted with the state of the provinces and course and nature of the revenues. To draw his character, in short, we need only say, he was in *political virtue* the very counterpart of *Hodjee Hamet*.

Conscious that his conduct at *Dacca* would not bear the test of examination, he availed himself of the present juncture of confusion; and in place of repairing to the capital, he fled to *Boschar Pundit*; and arrived in his camp, at the very period when that general resolved to quit the provinces, and return to *Sittarah*.

His known character and abilities procured him a ready and welcome reception; and his mischievous talents made him a dangerous instrument in the hands of these invaders; to accomplish, in a manner, the utter destruction of the country. He represented to *Boschar Pundit*, "That in the
 " present state of the provinces, he might
 " with facility and security assume the government of the Soubahdaary himself;
 " that it would be inglorious for him to retreat with the calf, when he could take the
 " cow also; that the rains would soon break
 " up, and set his cavalry at liberty; and that
 " he had no cause to apprehend the usurper
 " would ever have any power or force capable
 " of opposing him." *Boschar Pundit* greedily hearkened to this pernicious advice; immediately changed his rout; and returned from *Bierboheen* to *Burdomaan*, as before remarked; and having fixed his head quarters at *Burdwan*,

wan, he sent proper officers at the head of small parties to collect the revenues at every seat of custom; and this they did for some time with as much tranquillity, as if they had been the natural sovereigns of the country.

During these transactions the usurper was not idle. As soon as he had certain intelligence that the enemy had repassed the *Cutwab* river, he quitted the city; and being soon after re-inforced by the *Patna* levies, and the number of his *Putans* being encreased from the Northward, he formed his camp in the neighbourhood of *Morshadabad*. — The *English, French and Dutch*, thought it necessary, during the rains, by various means to fortify also, and add to the strength of their several settlements, at *Fort William, Chundernagore, Hougly and Cossimbuzar*; though they were hitherto unmolested in their persons, or property, by the enemy.

Early in *October* the enemy, by the advice of *Mhîr Hubbeeb*, threw a strong bridge of boats over the *Cutwab* river; the defence of which was given to him. By his assistance also the enemy was now supplied with some small cannon; fire arms; and ammunition. He constructed for the defence
of

of his bridge two large boats; the one contiguous above; the other below the bridge, on the *Plassey* side. On these he threw platforms, on which he planted a few carriage pieces; forming effectual barricadoes with loop holes, for the security of his own people, as well as for the annoyance of the usurper's troops, in case they should prove hardy enough to attack the bridge; for the defence of which he embarked with him the best marksmen he could select.—

This disposition being completed, the whole of the *Maharattor* army crossed over, and began their incursions to different parts of the island, where ever the waters would admit their marching: sometimes showing themselves in strong bodies round the usurper's camp; and insulting him with opprobrious language, without daring to attack him.

The latter end of *October*, the rains broke up; the waters decreased hourly; and the roads soon became passable every where. It was now the enemy thought it advisable to recall their detached parties, and unite their whole force; which they drew up between the usurper's camp and *Plassey* grove; secure of a retreat to their bridge. Here they

they halted three days ; and reported they would wait there and give the usurper battle.

Aliverdt, elated at this report, took the field, and advanced towards the enemy ; not doubting but that if he could once bring them to a general engagement, it would prove decisive in his favor.—His whole force amounted to about forty-eight thousand men ; of whom barely twenty thousand were horse. Whereas the enemy's force was wholly composed of cavalry ; an advantage they had the wisdom fully to avail themselves of, by the sagacious counsel of *Mbir Hubbeeb* ; through the course of this destructive and long contest.

As the usurper advanced, they retreated towards the bridge, which they now resolved to repass. This they could not effect without their rear's being warmly attacked and harrassed by *Aliverdt* ; who, for this purpose, advanced with a chosen body of horse, some hours before the main body of his army.

The enemy had gained the bridge, and passed over three fourths of their army ; when *Aliverdt* made a furious assault upon the remainder,

remainder, and threw them into confusion. But notwithstanding a heavy slaughter made amongst them, the greatest part of them recovered the bridge; and *Aliverdi* was obliged to draw off his people (who began to be severely galled by the fire from *Mbír Hubbeeb's* floating machine) and retire out of the reach of the shot, where he stayed until his heavy cannon was brought up to him.

Had *Mbír Hubbeeb*, in obedience to *Boschar Pundit's* orders, drawn off his party; and destroyed the bridge, as soon as the rear of the *Mabarattor* army past it; and *Aliverdi* retired; he would have gained great reputation in the action. But not suspecting that the usurper's cannon could possibly be so near, as it really was; he was so rash as to remain on his post, until *Aliverdi* had, with astonishing expedition, opened a battery of three six pounders upon it.—*Mbír Hubbeeb* stood one discharge from the battery; and now perceiving his error, attempted to escape with his party; but *Aliverdi* had posted a body of horse so advantageously, that immediately upon the discharge from his battery, they fell in pell mell with the enemy on the bridge; and a furious engagement ensued; in which *Mbír*
K
Hubbeeb's

Hubbeeb's party, three excepted, was cut to pieces. Himself and those three gained the *Cutwab* shore ; and by the advantage of a fleet horse that waited for him, he escaped to the *Mabarattor* army. A melancholy event closed the action : *Aliverdi's* troops crouding, in too great numbers, upon the bridge ; it failed under them ; and a thousand brave fellows perished in the river.

The usurper repaired the bridge with all possible diligence, and crossed over his troops and artillery in pursuit of the enemy ; who artfully eluded every attempt he made to bring them to a general action. Thus, by continual marches and counter-marches, his troops, particularly his foot, were almost exhausted by fatigue : whilst the *Mabarattors*, in detached parties, ranged the provinces at large ; collecting the revenues without the least interruption : the usurper not daring to divide his army further than reinforcing the garrison of *Bukchs Bunder* on the *Ganges*, with 500 horse, and 1000 gun men ; under the command of *Serafdi Mahomet*.

Aliverdi, touched with deep chagrin at seeing his so lately usurped dominions a prey to his enemies, without being able to protect

protect them, or bring the *Mubarattos* to any decisive action ; at last resolved to treat with *Boschar Pundit*. But that General was so elated with success, that he now added, at the instigation of *Mbîr Hubbeeb*, a new article to those already offered at *Burdwan*, viz. “ that the usurper should also restore
 “ the Soubahship to *Soujah Khan*’s family ;
 “ and resign the government he had so
 “ wickedly usurped to *Suffraaz Khan*’s eldest son.” *Mbîr Hubbeeb*, who knew that any treaty of peace would be fatal to himself, artfully threw this stumbling block in the way ; which he foresaw would render the treaty of none effect : and to carry this point, he insinuated to *Boschar Pundit*,
 “ that unless this article was insisted on,
 “ the most essential and positive-part of the
 “ Emperor’s orders would appear totally
 “ neglected ; and wished him, with great
 “ humility, to reflect how he would answer
 “ this neglect to his master, the King of
 “ *Sittarab*.”

This additional article produced the effect that *Mbîr Hubbeeb* expected ; for it was refused by the brothers with marks of resentment and disdain ; and hostilities were immediately commenced again on both sides.
 —Several skirmishes happened between
 K 2 them,

them, in which the usurper's horse always gained some advantage ; but these produced nothing decisive.

Hodjee Hamet, who never suffered any scruples of conscience to oppose the foulest means to accomplish his views ; in a private letter sent to his brother, urged the necessity in their present situation, of attempting that by treachery, which they had failed in obtaining by every other means. *Aliverdi*, who saw the hazardous and necessitous posture of their affairs, as well as his brother, did not long oppose the motion. *Hodjee* formed the plan ; and it was executed in manner following.

A treaty was set on foot by *Aliverdi*, who, under pretence of making it more conclusive and less liable to interruptions, proposed a conference with *Boschar Pundit*. The overture was accepted by that General ; contrary to the opinion of *Mbir Hubbeeb* and the rest of his principal officers.

It was agreed that a spacious tent should be prepared and erected by the usurper, midway between the two armies, where the chiefs were to meet on a certain day and hour ; attended each with eighty followers only ;
and

and that in the mean time hostilities on both sides should cease.

The appointed time being come, and all things prepared for the reception of the chiefs; they advanced with the stipulated number of followers, consisting on both sides of principal officers. When they approached near the tent, *Aliverdi* entered first, and was followed by *Boschar Pundit*, without the least suspicion of treachery.

The usual salutations and ceremonials being over, and both parties seated; on a signal given, two hundred select men who had been concealed by *Aliverdi* between a double lining of the tent, suddenly rushed out; and cut the *Maharattor* General and his party to pieces, before they were able to draw their scymiters; two or three only escaping in the confusion.

At the same instant a signal was displayed from the tent (before agreed on) for the speedy advance of the usurper's army: this being observed by the *Maharattor* army, they also began to be in motion, not knowing as yet what had happened. But being not long after joined by those who had escaped the slaughter, and informed of the fate of

their general and officers, they breathed nothing but fury and revenge.

In the first transports of their rage they advanced, and seemed resolved to avenge the treachery; by giving immediate battle to the usurper. But here, the wisdom and address of *Mbir Hubbeeb* interposed: he represented to them, " that the only means to frustrate the great object the usurper had in view by this treacherous assassination, was, to avoid coming to a general action with him." His arguments gained force and influence from the distracted state of the army; which was now under no head, or any regular command; and observing the usurper advancing towards them in full march, they suddenly retired; to his great mortification and disappointment.

As soon as the disorder in the *Mabarator* army subsided, they elected unanimously *Allre Bey* for their General; an officer that held the next rank to *Boschar Pundit*; and who bore a considerable degree of reputation amongst them. And now their conduct seemed to shew that they had resolved to execute that vengeance on the distressed country and inhabitants; which they could not execute on the usurper himself. To
this

this end, they planted small parties of observation about the skirts of his army to report his motions ; and appointing *Nagur*, the capital of *Bierbokeen*, for their general rendezvous, they divided their army and carried fire and sword in all their different routs.—They detached a strong body to *Bukchs Bunder*, which they attacked ; took ; and plundered : perpetrating every where the most execrable cruelties that revenge and inhumanity could dictate ; cutting off the ears, noses, and hands, of any of the inhabitants whom they suspected of concealing their wealth, or valuable moveables ; sometimes carrying their barbarity so far, as cutting off the breasts of women, on the same pretence ; neither sex nor age proving any security against these enraged barbarians.

During these horrid scenes of desolation, the usurper left no stratagems untried to bring the enemy to a battle ; but all his endeavours proved ineffectual. He was in continual chace of them from the beginning of *December 1742*, to the end of *February 1742-3* ; and at length, with astonishing bravery and perseverance, he obliged them to repair to their general rendezvous ; and to retire out of the provinces over the *Bierbo-*

Deen hills ; from whence they soon took their departure for *Sittarah*, to render an account of their expedition—leaving many of their brethren behind them in the hands of *Ali-verdi*, who had been taken prisoners in different actions. Amongst the prisoners, was an officer of distinction, character, and authority, named *'Essarow*, of whom we shall again have occasion to make mention.

March
Anno
1742-3.

The usurper had hardly time to breathe and form some hopes of recess, and ease to himself ; and tranquillity to his harrassed and desolate country ; when he was again alarmed by advices from *Orissa*, that another army of *Mabarattors* had entered the provinces by the way of *Cuttack*, commanded by *Ragojee* : and to compleat his distress, and put his fortitude to the utmost proof, he shortly after received intelligence by express from *Hodjee*, that a third army of *Mabarattors* had entered by the side of *Patna* commanded by *Ballerow*, and had already penetrated within a day or two's march of *Siclygully*. These Generals led each an army of 60,000 horse ; the first had been dispatched from *Sittarah*, to enforce the orders before given to *Boschar Pundit*, and to support him in the execution of them : the latter, marched out later from
the

the same city with instructions to join *Rangojee*, and avenge the murder of *Boschar Pundit*; of which, advice had been received at *Sittarab*, by expresses sent from *Bierboeen* immediately after that event.

The usurper thus beset, and apprehensive of being hemmed in by the two armies, and again cut off from his capital; directed his march with the utmost celerity to *Cutwab* bridge; which he gained; passed over his whole army; destroyed the bridge; and proceeded to his capital; with a mind greatly agitated and oppressed, by the reflection of being again forced to abandon his country to merciless enemies, whom he was not able to oppose with troops, enfeebled by continual labour and hardships.

The reader may remember of how great importance *the pass of Siclygully* might have been to the unfortunate *Suffraux Khan*, had it been properly put in a state of defence. The usurper well knew it's consequence; and therefore, soon after his possessing himself of the *Soubahship*, he stationed there a trusty officer with proved troops, and three pieces of cannon—depending that a vigorous stand would there be made against the invaders on the side of *Patna*; and their

en-

entrance into *Bengal* at least retarded, if the *pass* was as well defended as it was capable of: not suspecting that there was a possibility of their obtaining an inlet by any other passage, unless they marched far to the Westward by the *Pachet* road, and entered by *Bierbobeen*; as *Boschar Pundit* had done the preceding year; flattering himself, should they attempt it, that by so long a march they would not be able to reach the province before the annual rains set in: but herein his foresight failed him.

Ballajee Row, more commonly (though improperly) known by the name of *Ballerow*, on his arrival in the neighbourhood of *Boglypore*; received intelligence from those who had joined him, and were declared enemies of the usurper's house, that by his attempting to force the pass of *Siclygully* he would hazard the loss of a multitude of his men; and probably in the end be obliged to relinquish the design with disgrace to his arms.—The *Pachet road* was proposed, but he declined hearkening to it, urging “that thereby he should lose his
 “harvest of plunder for that year; all
 “which would be appropriated by his
 “friend *Ragojee* to fatten himself and followers; whilst *he* and *his* people would
 “be

“ be left to *starve* on the *Padjee* (paltry)
 “ contributions, he had been able to raise in
 “ *Babar.*”

Whilst he was under this difficulty, the evil genius of the usurper (and of unhappy *Bengal*) dictated a measure, that extricated him out of it without danger to himself or followers. He sent for some of the petty Rajahs from the neighbouring *Colgong* hills; and questioning them concerning a passage through the hills to *Bengal*, he offered them a large reward if any of them would supply him with guides to answer that purpose. The Rajahs, to a man, were well enough disposed to comply with his wishes; for the usurper's treacherous conduct, during the first six years of his government of *Babar*, had rendered his name as hateful as dreadful to them all: yet none of them had knowledge enough of the three ranges of mountains that separated *Babar* from *Bengal*, to engage in so hazardous an undertaking.

The enquiry and reward being, however, bruited abroad, it came to the ears of an old peasant an inhabitant of *Colgong* hills. This man came to the *Mabarattor* camp, and desired to be introduced to the presence
 of

of the General; which having obtained, he boldly undertook, on the forfeiture of his head, to guide his army through secret passes into *Bengal*, for a reward of one Lac of Rupees, paid down to his family.

The General taking two of the Rajahs aside, to whom the peasant was known; and enquiring of them touching the character of the man; and what degree of credit might be given to his veracity and knowledge; he received such encouragement that he no longer doubted; and accordingly paid down the money, and issued his orders for marching the next day.

The guide, with faithfulness and dexterity, led the whole *Mabarattor* army; at first Westward, a point or two Southerly; until he found a *pass*, which he sought for about the center of the range of the *Colgong* hills. This pass being found, it was his mark for the remainder of the expedition; and he carried them through it by very practicable roads with much facility, until the mouth of it opened upon the level country between the *Colgong* and *Telliagurry* hills. From hence his course was due South, which led to the second pass through the last-mentioned hills: this pass he accomplished with
equal

equal ease; and from hence for two days he crossed the level country, that lies between the *Telliagurry* and *Rajambol* mountains; shaping his course about South-East: at night he told the General he must halt until the morning sun appeared.——In the morning he led them due South, and in the evening of the same day entered a pass which guided them through the *Rajambol* mountains; and landed (if we may be allowed the expression) the whole army, without the loss either of man or horse, in *Bengal*; on the plains, West of the city of *Rajambol*, at a little town called *Banian Gang*. Having performed his obligation in six days, from leaving *Bogulpore* (more commonly by the English called *Boglypore*) through ways until this period deemed totally impassible; he was farther rewarded with handsome presents by *Ballajee Row*, and departed to his home: his name was *Sittaram Roy*; a *Gentoo* of the *Ranzpoot* tribe.——*Ballajee Row* reached *Banian Gang* the 13th of *March*, *Anno* 1742-3.

The usurper, who had received express intelligence of *Ballajee Row's* departure from *Bogulpore*, and of the march of his army Westward; did not entertain the least doubt but he was gone round the moun-

tains to enter *Bengal* by the *Pachet* or *Bier-babeen*; and was so much convinced of it, that he began to prepare again for taking the field; projecting that he might be able to bring the other army under *Ragojee* to an engagement, and defeat him before he could possibly be joined by *Ballajee Row*: but he had hardly formed this resolution, when he was advised by a courier, from his Governor of *Rajambol*, “ That *Ballajee Row* had entered *Bengal* by passes through the mountains, and was by that time, he believed, joined with *Ragojee*.”

This intelligence shocked the usurper's present hopes, but not his courage and constancy; he laid aside the project of repassing the *Cutwab* river—but determined not to coop himself up again in his capital; for the defence of which having made every necessary provision, he formed a strong camp not far from the city; preserving a ready communication with it.

The two *Maharattor* Generals met in the *Burdomaan* country, the 17th *March*, 1742-3; and after a private conference, the following agreement was published, “ that
 “ an equal partition of the revenues and
 “ plunder should be made between the two
 “ armies,

“ armies, who nevertheless were to act
 “ distinctly under their respective Generals
 “ and officers.” They then settled the different routs of their detached small parties, and took intire possession of the country. Then uniting the main bodies of their armies, they marched to *Cutwab*; constructed a new bridge; and passed over with their whole force. Here they again separated, and renewed the depredations every where, that *Boschar Pundit* had begun the preceding year.

During these transactions, the usurper kept himself within his entrenchments; yet he was not idle. Convinced he could not oppose them by force, he had nothing left but to combat them with fraud and stratagem; weapons which he was as great a master of, as of arms. His first movement was, to acquire a minute knowledge of the temper, genius, capacity, and characters of the two leaders of the enemy; and how they affected each other. In all these particulars he obtained perfect satisfaction, by the means of his prisoner *Scssarow*, before mentioned; whom he had distinguished by every mark of favor and respect from the time he first fell into his hands; foreseeing he might be of future use to him: and from the arrival
 of

of the two armies he had redoubled his caresses ; and of an enemy, had made him a fast friend.

Divide and conquer, was one of the usurper's favorite maxims in politics, as well as war. By the lights he had received from *Sessarow*, he rightly judged the minds of the enemies Generals were fitly disposed to take the impression he intended to stamp on them—he learnt that *Ballajee Row*, was hot; insolent; and withal avaritious to an extreme degree: that *Ragojee* was the bravest soldier, but irritated and jealous at *Ballajee Row*'s being sent equal in command with him, as he bore a superior rank to the other. And more to flatter the usurper's artful views, he was informed that already there subsisted some misunderstandings between them and their respective troops; touching suspicions of an unjust division of their plunder on both sides.

With these materials he began to work; laboring to enlarge a breach that was not yet wide enough for an attack. His plan was; by every means to promote the growth of those seeds of division and jealousy which had already taken root amongst them: to this end, he directed some capable emis-

faries (fully instructed) to desert to both armies; these executed his purposes so well, that they produced the effect he wished: they preposessed the enemy against themselves; who accused each other of illicit practices in the division both of the revenues and plunder; and the spies were so well prepared, that they produced proofs and vouchers of many instances of what they insinuated (on both sides) that would not admit of contradiction. This occasioned mutual heats and animosities between the two armies, and an open rupture soon followed; each resolving to act in future on a separate and independant footing. The usurper seized this favorable occasion; and knowing *Sesjarow* had an influence over *Ballajee Row*, (to whom he was related) he employed him to negotiate, in the most secret manner, a separate treaty of peace with that General.

Sesjarow exerted his power with such success, that he soon disposed his relation to receive favorable impressions of the usurper, and readily to hearken to a peace with him. To this he was the more easily induced, as thereby he indulged his ruling passion in the hopes of making his own advantage of the Usurper, without the participation of his rival *Ragojee*.

The preliminaries of this treaty were soon adjusted, “ the usurper was to cede
 “ to *Ballajee Row* alone, the *Chout* of two
 “ years revenues ; and *Ballajee Row* engaged
 “ on his part, to join the Usurper with his
 “ force, and assist him in driving *Ragojee*
 “ and his army out of the provinces.” It
 was further agreed, that to keep up the appearance of enmity and deceive *Ragojee* ; *Ballajee Row*’s army should advance nearer to the Usurper’s camp,—and make a shew of attacking it : this movement was not only made to amuse *Ragojee*, but also to facilitate a personal conference between the Usurper and the General ; which was to take place on the thirtieth of *March* 1743, near *Plassey*.

On the twenty-ninth of *March*, the usurper quitted his camp, and directed his march towards *Plassey*. He was not far advanced, before his spies brought him intelligence, that *Ragojee*’s army was in motion, as well as *Ballajee Row*’s : this raised a suspicion in *Ali-verdi*, that the treaty was only assented to, to amuse him, and draw him out of his camp : therefore he immediately retired to it again ; and the treaty was retarded until the motions of the two armies were explained to him.

Seffarow,

Sessuraw, deeply chagrined at suspicions which reflected on his own *sincerity*, engaged on the forfeiture of his head for *that* of his cousin ; which engagement being supported by a solemn oath (the *Ganges*) on the part of *Ballajee Row*, *Aliverdi's* doubts subsided ; the treaty was resumed ; and the conference appointed on the third of *April* : but the place of meeting was changed to midway between *Plassy* and *Burwah* ; a few miles nearer his camp and capital *.

On the second of *April*, the usurper again quitted his camp, and began his march ; having draughted off a select body of 10,000 horse ; commanded by *Mustapha Khan* ; that moved on his flank, to be an occasional check on *Ragojee*.

On the third, the chiefs met at the appointed place, in a tent (previously examined by deputies from both parties) about two corse distant from each of their armies.—The condition openly insisted upon by the *Maharattor* was, “ that twenty-five lac of

* The cause that gave rise to *Aliverdi's* suspicions, was this.—*Ragojee* having heard that *Ballajee Row* intended to attack *Aliverdi's* camp, and judging the city would fall a prey to him if he succeeded, he put his army in motion, that he might be near at hand, to come in for a share of the plunder.

“ rupees, for two years Chout of the revenues; should be paid down in gold;”——
 to this the Usurper replied, “ that howso-
 “ ever unreasonable the demand was, con-
 “ sidering they themselves had collected
 “ *the whole* of the revenues and customs
 “ for the last two years; yet, he would
 “ not make any objection, provided that
 “ *Ragojee* could be brought to sign the
 “ treaty; otherwise he could not submit
 “ to it:” This unexpected proposal was
 highly disgustful to *Ballajee Row*, and had
 well nigh broke off the treaty; but by the
 interpolation of *Sessarow*, he was at last
 prevailed on to send the overture to *Rago-
 jee*; but not until he had been made easy
 by the promise of a private gratuity for
 himself.

Ragojee immediately returned for answer,
 “ that he would hearken to no terms of ac-
 “ commodation, unless the payment of the
 “ Chout in perpetuity, was established to
 “ them; as a preliminary article for treat-
 “ ing at all*.”

When the messenger returned with this
 laconic reply, the treaty seemed for some

* This preliminary was dictated to him by *Mbir
 Hubbab*, who joined *Ragojee* as soon as he entered the
 province of *Bengall*.

time

time suspended.—However, by the address and mediation of *Seffarow*, a separate peace was at last concluded with *Ballajee Row*, on the following terms—“ That the Usurper
 “ shall pay down two years Chout, estimat-
 “ ed at twenty-two lac of rupees in gold ;
 “ and that *Ballajee Row* should either satisfy
 “ *Ragojee*, or join the Usurper to drive
 “ him out of the country.” To the performance of which they both solemnly engaged themselves by the most obligatory oaths ; this done, and mutual compliments and presents made, they parted.

The Usurper with great punctuality performed his part of the treaty in two days ; and *Ballajee Row* so far regarded it, that he drew off his army ; repassed *Cutwab* river ; and retired to *Burdomaan*, followed by *Ragojee* ; who thought himself no match for the Usurper on equal terms.

Ballajee Row, recalled all his detached parties ; and making a dividend amongst his troops of part of the Usurper's contribution, according to their different ranks, he quitted *Bengall* ; and marched by way of *Bierboheen* to *Sittarab* ; leaving (in breach of his solemn oath) *Ragojee* to make the best terms he could for himself.

This General made the most of his time ; and immediately took possession of those parts of the country, which had been lately evacuated by *Ballajee Row's* flying parties. He sent *Mbir Hubbeeb*, with the title and authority of General, to take possession of *Orissa* ; who accordingly seated himself at *Cuttack*, where he ruled as sovereign of the province.

The Usurper, called upon by the universal clamour of the people, and distressed of his country, once more quitted his capital, crossed over *Cutwah* river ; and marched in pursuit of *Ragojee* : in which chace he was employed all the remaining part of *April*, and until the middle of *May*, without being able, by any art or stratagem, to bring him to a general action. And the rains setting in earlier than usual this year, and the roads becoming impassable, both armies were obliged to go into quarters, about the twentieth of *May*. At the close of this campaign the enemy remained in quiet possession of *Orissa* ; and of all the country on the Western shore of the *Hougley* river ; from *Ballafore*, to within a few miles of *Tanna's Fort*, near the *English* settlement of *Fort William* *.

* *Aliverdi* retired with his army to *Morshadabad*, and *Ragojee* with his main body to *Bierbeen* during the rains,
 Though

Though the treaty of peace with *Ballajee Row* answered a present purpose, and relieved the Usurper from the more immediate danger which threatened himself, his capital and family ; yet it afforded no relief to the provinces. The partial execution of the treaty on the part of the *Mabarattor*, he could not be much surpris'd at ; as himself had set them an example of perfidy and treachery.

Every evil attending destructive war, was felt by this unhappy country in the most eminent degree. A scarcity of grain in all parts ; the wages of labor greatly enhanced ; trade ; foreign and inland, laboring under every disadvantage and oppression : —and although during the recesses of the enemy, from *June* to *October* ; the manufactures of this opulent kingdom raised their drooping heads, yet the duration of their reprieves from danger was so short, that every species of cloth at the *Arungs* was hastily, and consequently badly fabricated ; though immensely raised in its price ; and from these causes came into disrepute at all the foreign markets ; particularly at the Western ports of *Juddab*, *Mocha*, and *Bufforab*.

The trade of the *Europeans* became greatly embarrassed and injured ; their effects were often plundered by the enemy ; and these grievances were much heightened by oppressive exactions of the Usurper. But in this they were not singular ; for the whole of the people who still remained within the reach of his grasp, suffered equally in this respect : even *Juggaat Seet's* house, which so eminently promoted his usurpation, was often fleeced ; to the malicious joy of all, who were friends to *Soujab Khan's* family.

* For these oppressive measures the Usurper had nothing to plead in extenuation, but *the necessities of his situation* : and in truth, had he not been the ungrateful traitor he was, they were such, as would have merited the deepest commiseration : for although by his usurpation he became possessed of the treasures of the three last Soubahs, yet so immense were his continual expences and disbursements, that little of them remained ; it being pretty well known, that he, notwithstanding what has been said of the treaty with *Ballajee Row*, did not buy the absence and retreat of that General, for a sum less than five *korore* of rupees * ; although the twenty-two lac, for two years Chout only, were speciously published to the world ; to

* *Five Million Sterling.*

· save

save the credit of the Usurper, and to afford an opportunity to the *Mabarattor* of secreting from his followers all above that sum; which he appropriated to his own use; besides the lions share of the twenty-two lac: therefore he was well enabled at his departure to present to *Jeyndt Amet Khan*, *Hodjee's* second son, a single compleat dress (for *Seerpah*) valued at two lac of rupees.

In *October* 1743, the next campaign opened; when the Usurper again took the field: and *Ragojee* descending from the heights of *Bierboheen*, assembled his forces about *Burduwan*.—The succeeding months exhibited the same scenes of marches, countermarches, retreats and skirmishes, with various success; but with uniform misery to the people; who now for the first time, began to be plundered, and cruelly treated; as well by the detached parties of the Usurper, as of the enemy: the former assuming the dress and accoutrements of the *Mabarattors*, to cover and conceal their villanies.

Anno
1743

In *March* 1744, these invaders entered the provinces in fresh shoals, by *Cuttack*, *Bierboheen* and *Patna*, excited by the immense booty carried off by their brethren, the two preceding years—and thus this miserable

Anno
1743-4.

serable country fell annually a prey to the depredations of the *Maharattors*, under various leaders, for the six succeeding years; receiving no effectual check, but from the succession of the usual rainy seasons. During these intermediate spaces the country was left to fatten, that it might again be worth devouring. In the mean while, the Usurper sustained himself with amazing constancy, intrepidity and address; though often reduced to the deepest distresses; parts of his capital being frequently attacked and plundered.

In the latter part of the year 1744, by indefatigable and sudden marches he attacked and beat up all the quarters of the enemy; and obliged them to retire much sooner than usual. *Orissa* only remaining in their possession; early in *December* 1744, he marched to that province; where with expedition hardly to be conceived, he retook *Cuttack*, and recovered the province; obliging the enemy to retreat to the hills. Then leaving forces for the defence of it, he returned, and arrived at the capital, the beginning of *February* 1744-5; crowned with laurels; and received with wonder. Here, revolving in his mind the confusion of affairs in the province of *Babar* and city of *Patna*; and
its

its importance to him, as being one of the enemies keys into his country; and determining to have a Governor there, whose courage, capacity and integrity he might repose a perfect confidence in, he fixed upon his nephew *Jeyndee Amet Khan* for this post of trust. who possessed these qualities in a very high degree. He soon after set out for his government, escorted by a strong body of horse.

We shall omit entering more minutely into the particular occurrences of these annual invasions, which would only exhibit an irksome detail of murders, oppressions, and distresses, similar to those already recited: but as we cannot help viewing this Usurper in an extraordinary light, we should be inexcusable in neglecting to lay before the public and posterity those striking events, which were interesting in themselves; and which more strongly mark the character and genius of this great, though wicked man, in the course of a destructive eight years war. With this intent only we again resume our narrative from the close of the year 1745; a period which gave birth to an *incident*, that eventually proved not only the destruction of his hitherto

therto favorite General; but also that of his brother and nephew.

It was, at the time just mentioned above, that the Usurper first began to entertain suspicions and jealousies of the great reputation and power of *Mustapha Khan*; who had, by his master's liberality and other means, at different times acquired great wealth; which he profusely bestowed on the soldiery, but chiefly on the *Patans*; thereby gaining a dangerous popularity, that bore too much the appearance of ambitious views. Whether he really had any designs against his master is not known; but his being the idol of the army was cause sufficient to make him obnoxious; in a government where no subject can with safety to himself, or to his prince, be possessed of a superior degree of power or renown.

The Usurper had received intelligence from his brother *Hudjee*, that *Mustapha Khan* was forming designs to his prejudice; and that he had actually concerted measures with the *Maharattors*, for cutting him off the ensuing year; and placing himself in the government.

Whether this intelligence had truth for its foundation, or was only afterwards devised

vised to cover the step, that was premeditated against *Mustapha Khan*, is uncertain. *Hodjee*, however, had the address to produce vouchers for his suspicions that approached to facts; and these acquiring weight from the brother's apprehensions of that General's known talents, reputation, and popularity; it was resolved at all events that he should be assassinated the next time he appeared at court: assassins were accordingly provided, and stationed for his reception.

But *Mustapha Khan* being generally beloved, the design against him could not be so secretly conducted, as to prevent his receiving hints to provide for his safety; and though these were imperfect, they were yet sufficiently alarming to urge his immediate departure from the city, with 3000 *Patan* horse. In about twelve hours after, he was followed by *Sumseer Khan*, a *Patan* General next in command to him, with about 2000 more of their country-men. The whole being joined, by rapid marches, they arrived at *Sichygully*, before any suspicion or intelligence of a breach between them and the Usurper had reached the commander of that *pass*; and by a well feigned story of their being dispatched to join

join and re-inforce *Jeyndee Amet Khan*, they were permitted to advance into *Babâr* without interruption; intending to pass through that province into the *Patan* country.

So great a defection of his best troops, with two officers of such reputation at their head, struck the Usurper with the deepest apprehensions, and this on a double score. He had the greatest cause to dread a union between the *Maharattors* and *Mustapha Khan*; and by the secret flight of that General, he became convinced that some traytors were about his person: but still himself, under every exigency and difficulty, he lost not a moment—by large presents, and larger promises, he secured the fidelity of the remaining *Patans*—sent express upon express to his nephew *Jeyndî Amet Khan*, informing him of this untoward event, with orders “to take the field with what troops
“ he could get together, and endeavour to
“ intercept the fugitive *Patans*—and that
“ himself would go in pursuit of them,
“ and probably they might be hemmed
“ in between them.”

The Usurper immediately put himself at the head of a strong body of forces, who
were

were best attached to his person and government; and with the greatest expedition arrived at *Siclygully*; where he only stayed to strike off the head of that commander, who had suffered the *Patans* to pass his post.

Had the unfortunate *Mustapha Khan* made the same expedition from the pass of *Siclygully*, as he did to it; he would, in all human probability, have eluded the pursuit, and passed through *Babar* before he could possibly have been intercepted by *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, or overtaken by the Usurper. But for a particular reason, to be hereafter mentioned; and not suspecting he was pursued, he proceeded through *Babar* by such slow marches, that the Usurper came up with him between *Monghir* and *Patna*; and sent a messenger to him with offers of pardon, to himself and followers; if they would submit, and embrace again his service.

Mustapha Khan disdaining all terms of accommodation, returned the Usurper's messenger, with a brave defiance to him; and receiving intelligence at the same time, that *Jeyndi Amet* was within a few hours march of him, he thought it most advisable to
face

face about, and fight the Usurper first; having learnt his troops were very little superior in number to his own; therefore without hesitation he distributed the necessary orders, and gave the signal for battle.

The conflict was bloody, but of no long duration. Valour and resentment took full possession of the soul of *Mustapha Khan*, and left no place for prudence or precaution: fired with the hope of executing his vengeance on the Usurper, he thought all else unworthy his sword; and attempting with too much impetuosity to penetrate to that part where *Aliverdi* fought, and not being well supported, he was soon surrounded, overpowered and slain—his head was separated from his body, and elevated upon a spear—his death being known to the *Patans*, *Sumseer Khan*, with those that survived the battle, made a speedy flight; and taking a rout different from that, by which *Jeyndi Amet Khan* was advancing, they escaped out of the province; notwithstanding the eager pursuit that was made after them.

The Usurper returned to his capital more dreaded, but less beloved by the people, for this last stroke of his policy. The jealousy, and (generally believed) unjust motives,

for assassinating the *Putan* General were now blazed abroad ; and the Usurper became the object of detestation to some of his best friends, who drew a conclusion (from this act of base ingratitude to the man, who had so often preserved his life and government)—very unfavorable, and alarming to themselves ; as the merits of their greatest services, might on the slightest suspicions or fear, in the cowardly breast of *Hodjee*, only draw on their own destruction.

Hodjee, who had accompanied his brother in this expedition against *Mustapha Khan*, advanced with the head of the General, to meet his son *Jeyndi Amet Khan*. With him he returned to *Patna* ; and after bestowing many indignities upon the head of that brave man, whose face he could not have beheld the day before, without sinking into abject fear and terror ; he had now the coward bravery, to order it to be carried in triumph three times round the city ;——unworthy and indecent insults ! from which the remembrance of his former signal services should have defended his senseless remains.——*Justice* seemed to interest herself in avenging the death of this gallant man, by favoring in an extraordinary manner the escape of her destined instrument

Sumfeer Khan : and the brave *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, at the sight of the barbarous insults exercised by his father, could not refrain from tears ; for great friendship subsisted between him and the deceased ; and his memory was dear to him.

We will leave *Hodjee* on his return to *Morshadabad* ; exulting for a short time over the success of his treacherous machinations ; and advert to *Sumfeer Khan*.

This *Patan* General arriving safe with his few followers in their own country, began immediately to levy troops ; and with such success, that in the year 1747, he was enabled to advance towards *Patna*, at the head of 8000 choice horse.

Here it is necessary to advertise the reader, that the two *Patan* Generals on their sudden retreat from the city of *Morshadabad*, had opened a correspondence with *Mbir Hubbeeb*, informing him “ that they should
 “ return the next year, to attempt the cap-
 “ ture and plunder of *Patna* ; then march
 “ by the hills and join the *Maharattor*
 “ army ; and with their united force at-
 “ tack the Usurper ; declaring themselves
 “ justly absolved from all allegiance to the
 “ assassin.”

“ *assassin.*” *Mbir Hubbeeb* improved upon this plan and advised “ to encounter *Hedjee* and the Usurper with their own weapons, craft and treachery; for that, by address and management, and a well feigned contrition for their former conduct, and a fresh tender of their troops, they might easily obtain an interview with the Nabob of *Patna*; at which they should cut him off: a circumstance that would much facilitate the taking and plundering that city (which seemed to be their principal object) as such an event must necessarily cause the greatest confusion and consternation in the place.”

It was this intercourse of letters, that proved fatal to *Mustapha Khan*; by retarding his escape through *Babar*, as already mentioned—but the counsel of *Mbir Hubbeeb* was not lost upon *Sumjeer Khan*; who was a man, possessed of every requisite, for carrying it into effectual execution. He was brave; artful; beloved and highly esteemed by his officers and soldiers; who, to a man, were united to him in a solemn vow, to take an exemplary revenge for the death and indignities of their late lamented commander; or perish in the attempt.

November
1747.

With this determined view, *Sumseer Khan* began his march ; and being arrived within a few hours of *Patna*, on the opposite shore of the river, he dispatched a letter to *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, couched in the following terms, “ that his heart had felt the
“ deepest compunction for his past conduct,
“ to which he had been instigated by the
“ rash counsels of his late commanding officer ; that he appealed to *Jeyndi Amet*
“ himself, to witness for the proved fidelity
“ he had always shown for the service and
“ interest of the Soubah his uncle ; that he
“ had now raised a faithful and tried body
“ of officers and troops ; who, with him,
“ were ready to devote their lives to his
“ commands, against the common enemies
“ of his house and country : hoping he
“ should obtain permission to visit him ;
“ and in a personal conference, give him
“ more convincing proofs of his attachment
“ and submission.”

Jeyndi Amet Khan immediately communicated the contents of this letter to his father *Hodjee*, who was very lately arrived at *Patna* ; brought thither by some informations the brothers had received of the concerted scheme between *Sumseer Khan* and *Mbir Hubbeeb*, for the plunder of that capital—

tal—*Hodjee*, without a moment's hesitation, ordered his son to encourage *Sumfeer Khan's* visit, and cut him off; telling him, he himself would direct the means.

Jeyndi Amet Khan, much averse to obey these orders, determined to wait those of his uncle to whom he wrote, and transmitted a copy of *Sumfeer Khan's* letter; and in the mean time he returned in civil terms a reply to the *Patan General*, telling him "he had forwarded the purport of his request to the Soubah, but that he could not give any conclusive answer thereto, before the Soubah's pleasure was known."——This soon reached him, in these few, but peremptory words, "Regarding the business between us and *Sumfeer Khan*, follow the orders of your father."

Hodjee directed *Jeyndi Amet Khan* to write to the *Patan General*, "that he should with pleasure receive his visits, and rejoice to embrace him; as the Soubah had readily accepted the tender of his services, and wished his speedy march to *Morshada-bad*."——To which purport the Usurper had likewise wrote to him in pressing terms; thereby intending to lull him into the greater security.

We have already hinted the method proposed by *Mbir Hubbeeb* to the two *Patan* Generals, for taking off the Nabob of *Patna*, and plundering the city. The intelligence the brothers had received extended only to the latter part of their scheme; of the intended assassination of the Nabob they had not the least conception.—*Hodjee's* counter-plot for the murder of *Sumseer Khan*, was concerted in manner following. A day was appointed for the General's visit to *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, on a plain a small distance North of the city; where a sumptuous tent was prepared for his reception; in the floor of which a mine was sunk, whose train extended some distance from the tent. The signal for putting fire to the train, was *Jeyndi Amet Khan's* withdrawing a certain space from the tent.—Every circumstance of which was betrayed to *Sumseer Khan*, by a *Patan* in the service and confidence of *Hodjee*.

May 1747. On the receipt of the Usurper's and the Nabob's letters, *Sumseer Khan* passed the river with his troops, about two miles to the Northward of the city; and being advanced, on the day appointed, within a furlong of the tent; he received a polite message from the Nabob, requesting "that he would
" favor

“ favor him in ordering his troops to halt ;
 “ that they might not in their conference
 “ be incommoded by the dust ; for that he
 “ himself was only attended by fifty fol-
 “ lowers.” — This request was instantly
 complied with, and the *Patan* General pro-
 ceeded to the tent with a few selected atten-
 dants only ; all of whom were provided with
 armour under their coats.

They met in mutual embraces, and with
 the most affectionate compliments ; then
 over they seated themselves, and began to
 confer upon the operations of the war,
 against the common enemy the *Mubarat-*
tors. — After about an hour’s discourse, a
 servant came and whispered the Nabob,
 who soon after arose, telling the General
 “ that he was just going to give some ne-
 “ cessary orders for his reception and en-
 “ tertainment in the city, and should at-
 “ tend him again in a few minutes.” —
 When he had got half way to the door of
 the tent, *Sunjer Khan* and his attendants
 drew their scymitars, fell upon *Jeyndi Amet*
Khan, killed him, and all that were in the
 tent, before they had time to make any
 resistance : some instantly flew to the head
 of the train, to which they were perfectly
 instructed, and prevented fire being put to

it; for on the alarm, those who were on the outside of the tent, and thereby escaped the slaughter, fled with all speed to the city.

Sumseer Kkan made a signal for his troops to advance; and mounting his horse gained the city almost as soon as the fugitives, and entered it sword in hand with his soldiers; before *Hodjee Hamet* had received the least intelligence of the unhappy fate of his beloved son.

He proceeded immediately to the palace, where, with little resistance, he took *Hodjee Hamet* prisoner, at the very moment he was (in disguise) making his escape; and after securing him under a strong guard, he went in search of the principal *treasures* of the city, (to which he was minutely directed by his spies) these he deposited in the palace, and gave up the town to be plundered by the soldiers; who, for the space of three days, committed every ravage and outrage that revenge and avarice, backed by uncontrolled power, could meditate and execute; except against the English, French, and Dutch factories; which alone remained exempt from ruin and unmolested.

Hodjee

Hodjee Hamet, after suffering the heaviest reproaches and revilings from *Sumseer Khan*, for his base ingratitude, treachery, and cruelty to *Mustapha Khan*; and after undergoing a hundred and one lashes from the severe discipline of the Khorah, was by order of the general set on an ass, with his legs tied under the belly of the animal; and his face painted half black, half white; and thus led round the city, the same route himself had appointed for the head of the unfortunate *Mustapha Khan*.—Returning from this disgraceful progress, the discipline of the Khorah was again inflicted on him; not only as a punishment, but with a view to extort from him a confession and discovery of a large sum in gold and diamonds; which, it was said, he had buried or otherwise secreted;—but he bore the lash with amazing constancy; and made not the discovery that was aimed at.—After this he was chained to the leg of an elephant,—to that very elephant, on which the head of *Mustapha Khan* was exposed and elevated. *Sumseer Khan* had doomed him to a cruel and lingering death; but one of his guards, touched with his great age; the high dignity he had born; his cruel sufferings; and heavy lamentations for his murdered son; conveyed, in pity to him, a dose
of

of poison ; which he greedily swallowed and put an end to his miserable being.

Sumfer Khan, after this exemplary vengeance, made a short stay at *Patna*, and retired to his country with an immense booty ; but without paying any further regard, at least for the present, to the engagements that subsisted between him and *Mbir Hubbeeb*.

The fates of *Hadjee Hamet* and *Jeyndi Hamet Khan*, met a very different regard from the world ; the latter being as much lamented, as the memory of his father was detested. But it may be very easily conceived that the loss of both proved a heavy stroke of affliction to the Usurper ; who now became as eminently wretched as he was great. His grief on the arrival of the news was such, that it was with the greatest difficulty he was prevented following them.—However ; cool reflection soon took place ; and his usual fortitude surmounted, in a few days, the first violent impressions of his irreparable misfortune ; and obliged him to attend the concerns of his government ; to which he was roused and stimulated by the spirited, wise and affectionate representations of his *Begum*—A woman whose wisdom, magnanimity, benevolence, and every amiable

able quality, reflected high honour on her sex and station. She much influenced the Usurper's councils, and was ever consulted by him in every material movement in the state; except when sanguinary and treacherous measures were judged necessary; which he knew she would oppose, as she ever condemned them when perpetrated, howsoever successful,—predicting always that such politics would end in the ruin of his family.

Though the Usurper's critical situation called him to action; yet the death of his nephew ever after remained a heavy pressure upon his heart. He greatly loved him, and had designed him his successor in the government of the Soubahship, in preference to *Hodjee's* eldest son; who then bore the title of the Emperor's Dewan, (to which he had just as much right as his uncle had to that of Soubah.) But this design being blasted by the untimely decease of *Jeyndi Amet*; and that occasioned by the pernicious policy of his brother and himself: the only amends in his power to make to the manes of his murdered nephew was, to transfer the affection he ever bore him, to his eldest son *Mbirza Mahommed*; whom he immediately adopted as his own: and this youth

youth was, from that period, looked upon as his successor.

October
1747.

Until the rains broke up in *October* 1747, the Usurper remained unmolested; but now the *Mabarattors* re-entered the province of *Bengal* by the *Bierbobeen* hills; and *Sumseer Khan* having safely lodged his *Patna* plunder returned and entered *Babar*; at last remindingful of his engagement to *Mbir Hubbeeh*, and hoping by an union with the *Mabarattors*, to share at least the plunder also of *Morshadabad*.

The Usurper had taken the field very early—and on the first advice that *Sumseer Khan* had entered *Babar*, he advanced towards him by rapid marches; thirsting to revenge his brother's and nephew's deaths; and depending that he should be able to engage and defeat him, before the *Mabarattors* could possibly join him. Whilst he was in this pursuit, the *Mabarattors*, who did not think it eligible to risque an action with the Usurper until they had joined their new allies, were on full march to the settled rendezvous at *Bogolpare*; near which place the three armies arrived about the same time in the night. The Usurper encamped, and sent out his spies for intelligence.

gence. They soon returned and informed him he was encamped between the enemies armies; the *Patans* a corse to the Northward of him; and the *Maharattors* about the same distance to the Southward.—This perilous situation would have struck any but this brave Usurper with alarm and terror: some of his general officers proposed his taking the advantage of the night, and attempting a silent retreat to *Siclygully*; but he rejected this overture with high indignation.—He was perfectly acquainted with the different genius and disposition of the enemies he had to encounter; and from this knowledge formed his resolutions; the only resource left him was instantly obvious to this consummate general and soldier.

At midnight he held a council of war, of three or four of his principal officers only. To these he opened his designs, and directed them to issue orders for the troops to be ready to march, half an hour before day break; without striking their tents—strictly prohibiting they should encumber themselves with aught but their arms; for that his own, his officers, and soldiers baggage should be left in the camp; for which he himself would be accountable to them.
—These

—These orders distributed, he went to rest.

Before day break the Usurper put himself at the head of his troops, and marched to attack the *Patans* ; leaving his camp standing—he found them prepared to receive him, not doubting but their allies, whose situation they had learnt, would attack his rear.—A bloody engagement ensued, in which the Usurper might justly say, with another great usurper, “ that he had many “ times fought *for Empire*, but in this battle, *for Life*.”—After an obstinate contest *Sumseer Khan* was slain, and the *Patans* put to flight—instead of pursuing them, he immediately returned in good order to his camp; where, as he had foreseen, he found the *Maharattors* plundering it, confusedly dispersed, and regardless of the commands of their General or Officers:—In this situation the Usurper fell upon them, and after a great slaughter gave them a total defeat and rout. After these exploits he returned triumphantly to his capital.

Notwithstanding these glorious successes, he was incessantly harassed by, and forced to be ever in the field against the *Maharattors*,

ters, until the year 1750; when he made a lasting peace with them on the terms recited in the “ Short sketch of the history of *Bengal*,” before-mentioned; to which we beg leave to refer. There the reader may if he pleases follow this great wicked man, “ *through the more pleasing scenes of domestic life and public tranquillity.*” We shall content ourselves in closing this chapter, and second general head, with a few circumstances which happened in consequence of his natural demise, *Anno 1756.*—It is pretty well known, and has been by us severely felt, that he was succeeded by *Mbírza Mahommed* his adopted son and grandson (who assumed the title of *Surajad Dowla*) in the government: that after he had quelled an opposition that was made to his succession by part of his own family, he directed his arms against our settlements; took, and destroyed them.—The *causes* for that invasion of property, have been faithfully investigated and presented to the public in a second edition of “ *India Tracts*,” published *March, 1764.*—This short recapitulation would have had no place here, but to introduce a circumstance not so well known as the foregoing.

When *Surajad Dowla* declared his resolution to attack and drive the English out
of

of *Bengal*, he was opposed by the affectionate remonstrances of the deceased *Aliverdy Khan's Begum*, already mentioned—with every argument which love and maternal authority could devise, she labored to dissuade him from his purpose; but labored to no end: for though the young tyrant preserved some reverence for her person, yet her influence was not great: but when she found him deaf to her entreaties, she had the courage to tell him, “ She saw his own
 “ fate was blended with, and waited on
 “ the destruction he was aiming to accom-
 “ plish against the English; and that if he
 “ persisted, his rashness and injustice would
 “ not only be the cause of his own death,
 “ but the total ruin of his family.” Her wisdom and foresight was so great and extensive, that it was commonly said by the Usurper, “ He never knew her judgment
 “ or predictions fail.”

We hope to meet with pardon for doing honour to the character of this extraordinary woman; especially as we thereby embrace a favourable opportunity of discharging the tribute of sincere gratitude particularly due from us,—the author owing life and liberty to her humane and successful intercession.

C. H A P. III.

HA V I N G in the preceeding chapter shewn from what causes, and by what gradations the provinces of *Bengal* fell under the usurpation of *Aliverdi Khan*; our plan leads us next to convey a summary account of their produce, the division of their principals; districts; and towns; with their situation respecting each other; and their commonly estimated distance from our principal settlement of *Calcutta*.

Geographers have distinguished these provinces by the title of *the rich Kingdom of Bengal*; an epithet it highly merited when considered in its original state of opulence and tranquillity; in which point of view we intend to exhibit it, for this prevalent reason only; that we think it perfectly capable of being re-instated and improved; a circumstance well worthy our *present* knowledge and attention.

To form a just estimate of the value and importance of these provinces, we must consider them at the period, when they were governed by the younger princes of the Blood Royal; that is, some years before *Jaffier Khan's* Soubahship; for in his time they first began to decline and decrease in their worth; from causes already investigated in our last general head.

From his demise, the country for a few years recovered, and began to flourish, until within two years of the decease of *Sujab Khan*; when, by the rapacity of *Hodjee Hamet*, the Rajahs and Zemindars were again cruelly oppressed and plundered; and were thereby disabled from making good their contracts to the government.——Soon after this period, commenced the usurpation of *Alivcrdi Khan*; that drew on the *Mabarator* invasion; which overwhelmed the country in miseries of every kind for the full space of eight years.

The peace which the Usurper made with these invaders, *Anno 1750*; seemed, for four or five years, to promise the restoration of vigour to this harassed country: but its shattered constitution was scarcely beginning to revive, when the rash conduct of the
suc-

succeeding young tyrant reduced it again to
 eminent peril. A just vengeance and ne-
 cessity drew the English arms against him
 and his country ; which produced a revolu-
 tion fatal to himself and family ;—necessity
 again, produced a second revolution ;—
 wantonness a third ; and when we shall stop,
 time alone can disclose.—A few individuals
 may benefit by this shifting system ; but
 total ruin to the trade of the provinces, and
 to the Company, must manifestly in the end
 be the consequence of this continued war-
 fare, if not timely prevented ; notwithstand-
 ing the flattering, fallacious success of our
 arms.

The foregoing short recapitulation we
 thought necessary, to vindicate our conclu-
 sion ; that no perfect judgment can be made
 of the value of this inestimable country from
 any period of time within the last forty
 years ; during which space, with few and
 short interruptions, it has been involved in
 war, and labored under difficulties that have
 impaired it's very vitals. Thence, the neces-
 sity of our giving a picture of it in a per-
 manent settled government ; when the lands
 were permitted to yield their produce un-
 molested ; when the manufactures and every
 branch of trade flourished ; and when the
 rents, revenues, and customs resulting from

that happy state, prove it to have been as valuable a spot as any upon this globe ; if not the most so.

To this desirable state, we repeat, from our perfect knowledge and experience, it is capable of being restored under a *proper government* ; if it was not, our present labors were vain ; and could answer no end or purpose. What essential end and purpose they are calculated to obtain, we shall now venture to open ; and as I have no motive to influence me but sincere gratitude to my former employers, and true love for my country, I trust my endeavours will meet with candour and thanks—at least from the public, if not from that *respectable body of men*, for whose benefit they are more particularly intended.

Notwithstanding the plausible face of success, our affairs in *Bengal* may wear at present, by late advices from thence ; it is as demonstrable as any proposition in Euclid, that they cannot produce the great and essential end aimed at, *viz.* a lasting peace and settled government ; without which, the Company must sink under the pressure of a long expensive war ; which not only swallows up their new acquired
 REVENUE.

revenues ; but impedes and shackles their trade in every instance, shape, and form. In prosecution of this war, the heads of their servants abroad are turned and bewildered ; and their mercantile business (which only can support the Company in the end) must suffer under unavoidable neglects and abuses. The gentlemen at home in the direction of affairs, must labor under heavy embarrassments in conducting the two branches of war and trade ; either of which would fully employ their whole time and attention.

A trading and a fighting company, is a two headed monster in nature, that cannot exist long ; as the expence and inexperience of the latter, must exceed, confound, and destroy every profit or advantage gained by the former.—New *temporary* victories, stimulate and push us on to grasp at new acquisitions of territory ; these call for a large increase of military force to defend them ; and thus we shall go on, grasping and expending, until we cram our hands so full that they become cramped and numbed ; and we shall be obliged to quit, and relinquish even that part, which we might have held fast ; if bounds had been set to our progress :

which (upon the present system) we now see is utterly impossible; therefore a total change in our politics becomes indispensably necessary.

The gentlemen in the direction must surely see this fatal tendency of their affairs, and must tremble at it—but where's the remedy they will say?—it has been already pointed out and no regard paid to it—possibly, though convinced, they want the public sanction to a step they may think so extraordinary——though every day they are taking steps more extraordinary, in supporting their servants in a war against the Mogul, his Vice-Roys, and subjects, which on the present plan must unavoidably prove the ruin of the company.—We have a considerable concern in this stock, and therefore claim a right to speak—when private remonstrances fail, public ones may acquire a due influence.

Why we should wantonly persist in a state of destructive war, with a Potentate, whose alliance is so materially necessary to us; when we have it so much in our power to make a useful friend of him and his successors; is a conduct that surpasses human under-

understanding ; and yet that such has been our conduct for five years past is most certain.

Let us have done with this ringing changes upon Soubahs ; there's no end to it. Let us boldly dare to be Soubah *ourselves* ; our own terms have been more than once offered to us by the Emperor ; why should we longer hesitate to accept them ? We have not scrupled to seize and possess part of his territory with violence ; surely it would be more conscientious, and more consistent with the laws of nature and nations, to hold the whole of these provinces under him, by his own appointment.—That this would be readily assented to on his part, if a proper overture came from us, is not to be doubted : the consideration of his own great and obvious advantages, and the necessities of his situation would leave him no room for choice.

We have already convinced him, we are able, when we have a mind to set our own ruin and the lives of our fellow subjects at nought, to hold this part of his country from him, in spite of his strongest efforts against us : nay, possibly we might retain it under our subjection for some short time at least ;

but the consequence to him, and us, is obvious: a wanton expence of blood and treasure; while the object we are contending for is daily more and more desolated by this contention; and, bye and bye, will not be worth the possession of either—for every movement that does not tend to a lasting and firm peace by advantaging both, is fruitless; and can have no permanent or salutary effect; and most sure it is, that the plan we have hitherto pursued, and are still pursuing, cannot accomplish that desirable issue.

It is true, we have seen our forces in the East, under the conduct of an able and active commander, drive the Mogul's Vice-Roys out of the provinces. It is also true, that we have seen a spirited conduct and bravery in the Mogul's troops, that ought justly to strike us with apprehension of future consequences. The *Russians* when first attacked by *Sweden*, did not possess a tenth part of the courage and discipline that these our enemies have now acquired; and yet the event is known to the world.—Let us reason upon very probable suppositions; and not rest in a too great and flattering security, at a time when we have the greatest cause to be alarmed.

Suppose the Mogul's Vice-Roys should, from experience, at last evidently see; that the only way to conquer us, and render our courage and discipline of none effect, is to avoid ever coming to a *general action* with us: with the great superiority of numbers they will ever be able to bring into the field. they may by this precaution and dividing their army (which consists chiefly of cavalry) into small bodies; cut off our provisions and forage; beat up our quarters; harass our handful of men without ceasing; and finally destroy us without danger to themselves—and is it improbable they should at last adopt this conduct? we pronounce, no; it is most probable they will, as the only resource left for them.

Let us again, suppose a rupture with *France*, whilst we are engaged in this war with the Mogul; our presidency of *Fort William*, and our other factories in a manner deserted; and the chief strength of all our settlements acting at the distance of eight or nine hundred miles from the center of our possessions.—We will not suppose a rupture with *France* near; but let it come when it will, it sets at nought the article in the last treaty of peace, which gave us an exclusive right to *Bengal*; and therefore
ought

ought to be attended to: for it is not to be imagined, that they will neglect so favourable an occasion of attacking a settlement; which constitutes, in the East, the very essence of our being; when they find it left defenceless by the absence of our troops.

In short, every consideration calls aloud for a period being put to this unprofitable, and precarious war, by some other plan of operations; and we assert none is so eligible, honourable or practicable, as that we have now hinted at.—We have nibbled at these provinces for eight years; and notwithstanding an immense acquisition of territory and revenue, what benefit has resulted from our successes, to the company? are their dividends raised to the late standard of eight *per Cent*? no—it is impossible they should, whilst this destructive expensive contest exists—and shall we thus go on, nibbling and nibbling at the *bait*, until the trap falls and crushes us?—but to come more immediately to the point.

Permit us, Gentlemen, most humbly to advise, that express orders be sent without delay to your President and Governor of *Fort William*; to make the following overture of peace to the Mogull; viz. “ That on con-
dition

“ dition of his appointing and investing (to
 “ all intents and purposes) your Governor
 “ for the time being, Soubah of the Pro-
 “ vinces of *Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa*; you
 “ will engage on your part, that the sti-
 “ pulated sum of one khorore of rupees,
 “ shall be annually paid into the royal trea-
 “ sury; free of all deductions,”

As this sum nearly doubles the stipulation made by the usurper *Aliverdi Khan*, with the Vizir *Munsoor Ali Khan*, Anno 1750, (a tythe of which by the bye was never paid) and we venture to say, *re-doubles in one year*, any advantages the Emperors have received from the revenues of these provinces, for the space of *forty years last past*; we cannot entertain a doubt of his most readily acceding to the terms proposed; as thereby he would also secure a powerful ally, who could be occasionally of service to him on any emergency, in his government.

When we are invested with this Sovereignty and empowered to display the Mogul's royal standard; the provinces will be easily governed and kept in subjection, at a less annual expence and force, than the Company are now from necessity loaded with—but suppose it double, the *stake* is amply sufficient, as we shall presently demonstrate.

Some

Some narrow minded people, strangers to the nature of the country and government, will start; and make the greatness of the object a bugbear to their hopes and wishes—Was it possible, that the Company could unmolested enjoy what they have got, and pursue their trade without interruption; we should be amongst the first that might justly exclaim against their extending their views;—but, that this was impracticable, we have long foreseen and publicly declared;—and if we think at all, we must now be convinced there is no medium, or alternative, but this; that can be adopted with any appearance of security or permanency——*aut Soubab, aut nullus*, must now be our motto.

We cannot enough applaud the seasonable measure of sending out Lord *Clive*, which we esteem a happy event; notwithstanding, what could be done upon the present plan of politics, has been done without him—the weight of his Lordship's reputation and experience, in those parts, will most essentially promote this our new plan: he is the best qualified to negotiate it; the fittest to be first invested with that high power; and the most capable of fixing and leaving it upon a solid basis.—That these are our
real

real sentiments, flowing from a just regard to his Lordship's character, I think the public will not doubt; as they already know, we lie under no obligations to that quarter, that might excite our partiality.

We are very sensible, our rulers at home do not like to have the affairs of the Company, the subject of public disquisition. But as *they* and their affairs, are now truly become a very important national concern; and their own intestine quarrels have given a latitude to make their conduct the sport of every pen; we think there needs the less apology for the liberty we now take; as one of our chief motives is, to extricate *them* from the difficulties, we imagine they must be plunged in at this period. And no drowning man will be angry at another, who stretches out a friendly hand to save him from sinking?—The pointing out a measure to them that must, if it takes place, in a very short space, mount their stock in substantial real value to five hundred; will not hurt them or the proprietors.

But it may be asked us, if these only are your motives, why not intimate the measure in private to our chairman or court of directors? Why not communicate it, and enforce

force it, at a quarterly general court? Why not call a general court *on special matters*? Why are our affairs and schemes to be canvassed by the public? Have patience, my friends, and we will answer these interrogatories by one prevalent reason that determines us, to adopt none of them.—*Private intimations for public good*, leave the *parties entrusted*, at large; and without public check, to concur with, or *reject* and lay aside, the means proposed; as caprice, want of comprehension, particular private views, or divided counsels, may chance to influence:—but when *publicly made*, they then become accountable *to the world*.—In assigning this reason, we must not be thought to insinuate any doubt, injurious to the honour and integrity of the present Chairman, or present court of Directors; whom, from the sincerity of our heart, we believe as much attached to the true interest of the *East India Company*, as any sett of gentlemen who ever sat at that board.

Our wish is, to promote the well being of the *East India Company*; and not intentionally to give offence to any; and if our proposed plan meets not the approbation and concurrence of those who will most benefit by the event, we can only la-

ment their loss and our own.—It appears by a correspondence laid before the public, last year, that we urged the necessity of *this measure* in the year 1760 ; Glorious ! would have been the issue for the company, had it been then carried into execution ; and happy for many unfortunate individuals, who since perished by a contrary system of politics !—There would then have been no call or necessity, for this Nabob-changing scheme ; the provinces would have been established in peace ; and war, revolutions, murders, and massacres, without *a* being—however, from a thorough conviction we say, it is not now too late to regain the happy opportunity we then lost : nay, subsequent events, rather encourage and afford a more favorable aspect ; as things may be accomplished now under less difficulties, than we should at that period have had to encounter and struggle with.—In this confidence we shall proceed, and by a rough sketch of the produce of the revenues, show the vast stake we throw for. If we win, the gain will be immense : if we fail in the attempt, we are but where we were ; and at the worst, shall have it in our power to resume our *old Dog Trot* policy again.

At *Natoor*, about ten days travel North-East of *Calcutta*, resides the family of the most ancient and opulent of the *Hindoo* Princes of *Bengall*; *Rajah Rhaam Kbaunt*; of the race of *Bramins*; who deceased in the year 1748, and was succeeded by his wife, a Princess named *Bowanny Rhaanee*; whose *Dewan*, or Minister, was *Diaram* of the *Teely* cast, or Tribe. They possess a tract of country of about thirty-five days travel*; and under a settled government, their stipulated annual rents to the crown were seventy lac of *Sicca* rupees,—the real revenues, about one khorore and an half.

The chief towns of these districts are, *Malda*, *Harrial*, *Seerpore*, *Balekooshy*, and *Cogmarry*; all separately famous for manufacturing the following species of piece goods, viz. for the *Europe* markets, cossacs, elatches, hummums, chowtahs, ootally soofies, seersuchers and raw-silk:—for the markets of *Bissorab*, *Mocha*, *Judda*, *Pegu*,

* The *Gentoos* estimate distances by corsees, but more commonly by a day's journey, which they reckon five corse, but as the corse varies in different districts, from one and a half to two and a half miles *English*, we take the medium days travels at ten *English* miles.

Acbeem

Acbeen and *Malacca*, the different sorts of coffa's, baftas, fannoofe, mulmulls, tanjeb's, ordinary kenchees, &c. &c.

This country produces alfo, copofs, or *Bengal* cotton, with which the above fortments of goods are in part manufactured; but the produce does not bear any proportion to the confumption, fo that they are indebted to foreign markets for this article; and chiefly to the port of *Surat*.

The towns of *Isawangunge*, *Siebgunge*, *Sorupgunge*, and *Jummaalgunge*, are all famous markets for grain; as their names imply.*

Contiguous to this laft mentioned diftrict, but ftill more to the North-Eaft, lie the lands of *Rajah Praunaut* of the Koyt, or Scribe Calt. His diftrict extends about fifty days travel; confifts moftly of lowlands; and is in great part annually overflowed. His ftipulated yearly payment is twenty lac; the real produce of his revenue, from fixty to feventy—the chief products of his country are grain, oil, and ghee, (an article much ufed in *Indian* cookery) it likewife yields fome fpecies of piece goods and

* The meaning of *Gunge* being a grain market.

raw silk; also fooole sugar, lump jaggre, ginger, long pepper, and piplymol—articles that usually compose the gruff cargoes of our outward bound shipping.

The principal towns of this district, are *Rungpore Gooragat*; and *Santose Buddaal*, the capital residence of the head of this family: from these *Arungs*, the *East India* companies are supplied with sannoos, mulmulls, tanjebbs and raw-silk.

The great market of *Bugwan Gola**, is supplied from this district, with the three important articles of grain, oil, and ghee,—and now we have occasion to mention this mart, it is not foreign to our purpose to dwell a little longer on it—it is situate on the *Ganges*, about a day and a half North from *Moorshedabad*; and two days South Easterly of *Rajambol*; and is the greatest market for the above-mentioned articles in *Indostan*, or possibly in the known world. The customs on grain only, amount to three lac of rupees *per Annum*—all the customs and duties of *Bugwan Gola*, rank in the list of revenues, under the head of *Kboys Mbol*, that is, duties which are kept in the government's hands; and not farmed out.

* *Gola* signifies a granary.

This place is defended on the land side by a ditch and pallisadoes; and is always, in troublesome times, garrisoned by a thousand horse and a thousand foot.—In the year 1743, it was four times attacked by the *Maharattors*, under *Boschar Pandit* and *Alibeg*, who were as often repulsed.—It is a place of such importance to the *Soubah*, that the command of the garrison is always bestowed on the most experienced and trust-worthy officer he has in his service: the whole of its revenues being usually valued, in peaceable times, at thirty lac *per Annum*. In the beginning of the year 1759, it was again attacked by the *Maharattors*; taken and plundered of an immense booty.

North-West of *Fort William*, and about three days and a half distant, lie the lands of *Rojab Tillyuck Chund*, extending twelve days travel. The stipulated rents of these lands are thirty-two lac *per Annum*; but, their real produce and value, from eighty lac to one khorore. This is the principal of the three districts, ceded in perpetuity to the company; by the treaty with *Cassim Ali Khan*, in the year, 1760.

The principal towns of this district are *Burdwan*, *Kirpy*, *Radnagore*, *Dewangunge* and

and *Ballikissagur* ; these supply the *East India* companies with the following sortments of piece goods, viz. doorcas, terrandams, cuttanies, soofies, foot romaals, gurras, sesterfoys, fanton couplees, cherriderries, chilys, custas and doosfoota's. The capital *Burdwan*, may be properly called the center of the trade of the provinces. In tranquil times, this place afforded an annual large vend for the valuable staples of lead, copper, broad cloth, tin, pepper and tootague. The *Puggiah* merchants from *Delby* and *Agra*, resorted yearly to this great mart ; and would again, if peace was established in the country :—they purchased the above staples, either with money ; or in barter for opium, tincal, salt petre and horses.

This district produces raw-filk and co-poss, sufficient only for manufacturing their soofies, cuttanies and gurras.—The lesser towns manufacture other inferior sortments of cloth, as seerbunds, gollabunds, &c.—it produces grain, equal to the consumption of the people only.

Burdumaan (the proper name of the district) is high ; better peopled, and better cultivated than any part of the three provinces.

vinces. Blessings! that caused it every year, more particularly, to become a prey to the *Maharattors*; as before recited.

The family of this Rajah farmed lands to the amount of four lac *per Annum*; contiguous to the bounds of *Calcutta*; and had a palace at *Beallab*, about seven miles South of it—the Fort of *Buzbudjee*, on the *Ganges*, was also their property.

To the West of *Burdwan*, something Northerly, lie the lands belonging to the family of *Rajah Gopaul Sing*, of the *Raaz-poot Bramin* tribe. They possess an extent of sixteen days travel; this district produces an annual revenue of between thirty and forty lac; but from the happiness of their situation, he is perhaps the most independant Rajah of *Indostan*; having it always in his power to overflow his country, and drown any enemy that comes against him: as happened at the beginning of *Soujab Khan's* government; who sent a strong body of horse to reduce him: these he suffered to advance far into his country; then opening the dams of the rivers he destroyed them to a man. This action discouraged any subsequent attempts to reduce him—but if the frontiers of the district were so invested, as

to prevent the exit of the merchandize of his country, which might easily be done; he would be presently brought to obedience; and would be glad to compound for a tribute of twenty lac *per Annum*. As it is; he can hardly be said to acknowledge any allegiance to the Mogul or Soubah; some years deigning to send to him an acknowledgement, by way of salaamy (or present) of 15,000 rupees; sometimes 20,000; and some years not any thing at all; as he happens to be disposed.

But, in truth, it would be almost cruelty to molest these happy people; for in this district, are the only vestiges of the beauty, purity, piety, regularity, equity and strictness of the ancient *Indostan* government. Here the property, as well as the liberty of the people, are inviolate. Here, no robberies are heard of, either private or public; the traveller, either with, or without merchandize, on his entering this district, becomes the immediate care of the government; which allows him guards without any expence, to conduct him from stage to stage; and these are accountable for the safety and accommodation of his person and effects.— At the end of the first stage, he is delivered over, with certain benevolent formalities, to the
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the guards of the next; who after interrogating the traveller, as to the usage he had received in his journey, dismiss the first guard with a written certificate of their behaviour, and a receipt for the traveller and his effects; which certificate or receipt are returnable to the commanding officer of the first stage; who registers the same, and regularly reports it to the Rajah.

In this form, the traveller is passed through the country; and if he *only passes*, he is not suffered to be at any expence for food, accommodation, or carriage for his merchandize or baggage. But it is otherwise, if he is permitted to make any residence in one place above three days; unless occasioned by sickness, or any unavoidable accident.— If any thing is lost in this district; for instance, a bag of money or other valuable; the person who finds it, hangs it upon the next tree, and gives notice to the nearest Chowkey or place of guard; the officer of which, orders immediate publication of the same by beat of tomtom, or drum.

There are in this precinct, no less than three hundred and sixty considerable Pagodas, or places of public worship; erected by this Rajah, and his ancestors.—The worship of the cow is here carried to so

great an extreme; that if that animal meets with a violent death, the city, or village, to which it belonged, goes into a general mourning and fast, for three days; and all are obliged, from the Rajah to the meanest of the people, to remain on the spot, where they first heard the publication of the accident; and are employed, during that space, in performing various expiations, as directed in the *Shastab*. But more of this under a subsequent general head.

Bisnapore, the capital, and chief residence of the Rajah, and which gives a name to the whole district, is also the chief seat of trade. The produce of the country consists of shal timbers (a wood equal in quality to the best of our oak) dammer lacca's, an inferior sortment of raw-silk——and copos and grain, sufficient only for their consumption: it is from this district that the *East India* Companies are chiefly supplied with the article of shell lacca.

North-West of *Bisnapore*, contiguous lie the territories of *Buddier Jamma Khan*, son and successor to *Astela Khan*, a Mogul, and Prince of *Bierlobeen*.——How this *Mahomedan* family, originally crept in among the *Hindoo Rajahs*, we never could learn

learn with any precision; but think it proceeded from it's importance to the Mogul government; as being the pass into *Bengal*, from which most danger of invaders was to be apprehended; and therefore the Emperor judged it expedient to have the government of this pass in the hands of a Mahomedan Prince: the conquered Rajahs not being deemed trust worthy.

The lands formerly possessed by this family, equalled in extent those of *Bishnapore*; and yielded nearly the same articles of merchandize, and about the same revenue but as soon as *Aliverdi Khan* usurped the government of the Southahship, he divested this Rajah (for so he is commonly called) of a great part of his country, and otherwise oppressed him; which he had afterwards cause to repent, as we have before shewn, but notwithstanding that, he remained taxed at ten lac *per Annum*.

The fertile part of his country is in the center of the *Bie-been* mountains. His chief residence is the fortress of *Nagor*; and his principal town of trade, is *Illumbazar*; from whence the *East India* Companies usually had the greatest part of their gurras provided: but the *Makarattor* inva-
sion,

tion occasioned, in a great measure, this branch of trade to be transferred to the town of *Cutwab*.

North East of *Calcutta*, distant about three days journey, lies *Kissnagur*; the fort and capital of *Rajah Kissen Chund*. He possesses a tract of country of about twelve days journey; and is taxed at nine Lac per annum; though his revenues exceed twenty five Lac. His principal towns are *Santipore*, *Nuddeab*, *Bouren*, &c. where mullmulls, cof-faes, and cotton yarn are manufactured for the Europe markets: the country produces coppos and grain, but not sufficient for exportation.

The revenues of the city of *Dacca* (once the capital of *Bengal*) at a low estimation, amount annually to two Khorore; proceeding from customs and duties levied on cloths, gain, oil, ghee, beetlenut, chank-metals, salt, and tobacco, &c.

The foregoing instances of the value of the lands, in the province of *Bengal* only, held by the Rajahs shall suffice; without or particularising those held by the *Zemin-das*, scattered through the province: some of whom are very considerable land holders.

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These are generally taxed nearer the real value of their lands, than those which are held by the Rajahs.

Time presses, and will not permit us to enter minutely into a detail of the other branches of the revenues of this opulent country, in times of settled peace; a bare mention of the principal remaining sources will fully and amply justify the point we aim at, and shew the vast importance of the stake we are pushing for.

Under this head are the revenues of the city of *Patna*, and those of the province of *Babar*—the government of *Purnea*, a rich *Nabobship*—the revenues of the capital of *Morshadabad*; the city of *Rajambol*; the towns and districts of *Cossimbuzar*, *Cuttack*, *Mercha*, *Buxbunder*, *Azimgunge*, *Jilingbee*, *Baaker Gunge*, *Pajapore*; several petty *Nabobships* and *Foujdarys*, &c. &c. &c.—the governments and districts of *Midnapore*, and *Chitygongh*, already ceded to us by the treaty of 1760—and the *Purgunnahs* ceded by the treaty 1757, all held by a most precarious tenure, whilst this war with the government subsists.

We make no account of the province of *Orissa*, usually estimated at one Khorore and

and a half, because it is a moot point, whether the Emperor will engage in any equivalent plan of satisfaction for the *Maharattors* evacuating it. Be this as it may, if our general scheme succeeds, it would be worth *our* while to attempt the getting rid of them by fair means; as this province is greatly improvable, and constitutes a necessary frontier barrier to *Bengal* on the South. We say nothing neither of the *Jaggbier* lands, which are not taken into our estimate, though these are objects may be worth a future consideration.

To sum up the whole, we venture to stake our credit and veracity on the assertion, that the two provinces of *Bengal* and *Babar*, will fully yield a revenue of *eleven Khorore per annum*, or 13,750,000 pounds sterling—if it yields this under a despotic and tyrannic government, in times of peace and currency of trade, what may *we* not more expect from it's improvements, under a mild and British one?—We beg leave to repeat, by way of conclusion, that

If we should succeed in the attempt, great and glorious will be the British name in those parts; and immense the gain to the company and nation—if we fail—nothing
remains,

remains, but to obtain a lasting *peace* on almost any terms—for if this war continues much longer, on the present ineffectual and expensive footing, the company, as a company, cannot possibly support it; and therefore they must be reduced to the necessity of applying to our own government, for more powerful and potent aids than they hitherto have been indulged and favored with; though this has, we confess, been *pretty considerable already*. What right we have (I speak as a proprietor) to claim or expect more—we leave to be resolved by our honorable rulers.

With the above obvious conclusion, we close this our third general head, and *first part* of our work; and shall proceed to the discussion of our remaining five general heads, in a second part, as speedily as leisure and opportunity will permit.

P O S T S C R I P T.

Having received intimation that a certain party intended again to make application to parliament, for an act to lay the *splitting* of East India stock under some restrictions; and having seriously considered this subject in, we think, a new point of view; we
 I beg

beg leave to be heard a few words relative to this matter ; and a few more, touching the present mode of governing this company.

It is extraordinary that in the course of so much altercation before the general election, last year, on the propriety or impropriety of splitting stock ; two obvious considerations should not (as we remember) have been ever urged in defence of this practice : which, if duly weighed, we humbly imagine would determine parliament to discountenance, and throw out, any bill brought before them for the above-mentioned purpose.

That both parties, in the last year's direction, benefited themselves by this practice, is incontestable ; notwithstanding the bold assertion and fallacious reasoning on one side ; and the unmasked hypocrisy of *their champion Verax*.——

It was asserted, “ that neither the stockholder could split nor transfer, nor the transfer accept and vote, consistently with a good conscience as a christian, or an honest man.”—To examine the foundation of this heavy charge, let us consider the

the situation of every East India proprietor on the common plan of voting, at general courts or general elections.

The proprietor who holds 50,000 *l.* original stock, and he who holds 500 *l.* are, touching the government of this company, upon an equal footing. Strange! that a regulation so repugnant to equity and the nature of things, should have so long subsisted without amendment.

The *attachment* and *attention*, which every individual owes to the particular community he belongs to, will, nay, must be in proportion to the specific *concern* and *part* he holds therein: therefore the proprietor who holds only 500 *l.* stock, will be less attached and attentive, and more liable to be swayed and influenced to join in bad measures with designing men, than the proprietor who holds 50,000 *l.* stock.—Therefore whilst this inconsistent regulation subsists, and the letter of it is strictly adhered to, what remedy or means has the proprietor of 80,000 *l.* stock, to obtain an influence in the government of this company on any critical emergency in their affairs, adequate to his *concern* and *risque*, but this very method of splitting and divid-
ing

ing his stock ? consequently, every attempt to deprive him of this only resource is, beyond doubt, most unjust ; and may tend to the destruction of the company, if they should ever fall into the hands of a designing, self-interested, and wicked set of directors.

To refute the charge of dishonesty in the action itself, we need only consider it in comparison with a transaction much more common ; yet, we conceive, strictly similar to it.

A. borrows 500 *l.* of B. *on note of hand payable in any stipulated time* ;—will any man be hardy enough to say, that this money is not the property of A. to all intents and purposes, during the time of possession ? —and could not A. conscientiously and honestly swear it was so ? —where then is the essential difference between borrowing 500 *l.* cash, or 500 *l.* stock ? —*Verax* will tell you (though he laughs in his sleeve at the same time) “ that A. borrows the
 “ 500 *l.* cash to convert it to his own pri-
 “ vate occasions : but that the stock lent
 “ and transferred to A. is the consequence of
 “ a private compact and collusion between
 “ A. and B. to enable and qualify A. to
 “ vote

“ vote on that side of the question A. to “ point out to him.”——Be it so—yet the moment B. transfers, and A. accepts, this individual 500 *l.* stock becomes the property of A. it has every essential of property, that property can have annexed to it—he can sell, dispose of, give it away, and expend it in any manner he pleases; and though he determines to hold it, yet it remains totally in his own breast on which side he will bestow his vote, (as a certain party we believe found the last election, to their great disappointment and disgrace.)——*Verax* will again tell you, there is a counter obligation for A’s replacing this individual stock.—In like manner A. is obliged to repay his 500 *l.* cash, and take up his note; if in either case he fails, B. has his remedy at law—but A. may most ruelly swear either to be *bona fide* his property, whilst they continue in his possession, though he is accountable in the one case for payment, and the other for replacing.

Touching the mode of governing this company, we beg leave to say, it never was, nor ever can be *well governed* on it’s present institution.—Would you have your court of directors respectable? reduce their number to fourteen; raise the qualification

for a director to 10,000*l.* original stock ; and their salaries to 600*l.* *per annum*. On this plan, the direction of your affairs would become an object worthy of being courted by men of the most distinguished characters, abilities, and property : which the present great importance of this company loudly calls to be at their head—men who would not be shackled by their necessary attention to their own little concerns ; and thereby, obliged to abandon those of the company to the conduct and disposal of one, two, or three members of their body ; which unhappily has been the fate of this company from it's first institution.

SUPPLEMENT.

TO HENRY CRABB BOULTON, Esq;

C H A I R M A N,

AND THE REST OF THE GENTLEMEN,

At present in the Direction of the Affairs of the
East-India Company.

GENTLEMEN,

THE many years I resided in *India*; the many offices I bore in the Company's service; the natural bent of my genius to observation and inquiry, and the various occasions that called forth a particular exertion of it, with the fruits of all those taken together, having been, in every interval of leisure and retirement, the subject of much meditation and recollection; I have been induced to give to the Public my thoughts on the affairs of that Country in general, and of *Bengall* (with which I am best acquainted) in particular. My intention was surely laudable from its utility to you, to your Constituents, and my Country; I say, for this reason my intention was laudable, whatever defects might be in the execution.

I was very conscious of the difficulty of the undertaking, and not less so, that there were many gentlemen, who had merited and raised to themselves both honours and fortunes in the service, more able to have performed such a task. Yet seeing their neglect, and well knowing that the greatest capacity, the most unwearied diligence in a Board of Directors, could never supply them with those lights, which experience only can furnish, or open to them the large and extensive views so requisite to persons in their station; I judged it expedient, or rather a duty incumbent on me, to make an offering to you and the Public of that knowledge which with unceasing diligence I had labored to obtain, and not suffer it to become altogether useless, by being buried in oblivion: More especially, as the critical conjuncture of your affairs in *India* seemed to call aloud for every assistance of the kind, for the better information of you, Gentlemen, who are intrusted with the interests of the whole body of the Proprietors; and not of them only, but also with the interest the Nation in general has, and must always have, in its commerce to the *East-Indies*.

These, and these only were my motives to the work I published in *August* last. I leave you to judge, Gentlemen, how great my surprize and chagrin at being informed it has been privately insinuated to you (and probably some of your opinions influenced to believe) that in the estimate I have there given, the value of the rich provinces of *Benzall*, is highly exaggerated and much beyond the truth.

Although my Chapter on this subject was more particularly addressed to you, yet as I had given it to the Public, I might reasonably have expected, if any one was better informed, or doubted on plausible grounds the authenticity of my computation, it would have been publicly impeached, and an opportunity afforded ~~me~~ thereby of vindicating its truth, by laying before the Public the grounds on which it is formed.

I hold myself much obliged to those friends, who by giving me timely intelligence of those insinuations, have put it in my power to do myself justice, and which is of far greater consequence, to do justice to the subject, by giving you such further information, as may remove every shadow of objection, and leave you thoroughly persuaded of the truth of what I have asserted to you and the Public; for although it is of no great moment to me, to you, or the Public to inquire, whether those insinuations arose from envy, self-interest, or personal malevolence; from whatsoever source they flowed, it is of great importance to the welfare of the *East-India Company* and to the interest of the Nation in general, as well as in justice to my veracity, that by a speedy discussion their fatal tendency may be effectually removed. I beg leave to add, that at this time it is particularly necessary that all undue influence should be erased from your minds, as it is the season when *Bengall* affairs come in course under your immediate inspection, allow me therefore to presume there is great propriety (as my heart assures me there is great sincerity) in my present address.

By dedicating the Chapter in question, regarding the revenues, more particularly to you, I appealed as it were to you, who have in your hands vouchers, that by parity of reasoning (as will be shewn hereafter) would confirm my assertion, and thereby as I thought made it unnecessary to enter minutely into those proofs in support of it, which a bare *ipse dixit* in an address to the Public might have required. Without referring to such evidence, might I not reasonably hope to have had credit for my assertion with you, as I was conscious you very well knew that none of the Company's servants had ever applied with more diligence to this branch of your concerns, or met with more (if so many) repeated opportunities of prosecuting such inquiries: I entered on them early, I took my informations from those who were the best veried in these matters; I laboured hard to obtain intelligence of this sort, long before there was the least probability of my making use of that intelligence in a practical way; and afterwards my duty lead me to verify many points relating to the subject, by the unerring light of experience; and the more my experience, the fuller were the evidences, and the stronger my conviction of the justness of that intelligence I had acquired. Might I not then rationally presume, under a full and firm conviction, that what I was writing was thoroughly well founded, (which could alone have prompted me to a task, to which I was not otherwise called) that I might make the offering to you and the Public, without apprehension of any impeachment of its veracity, but on the clearest and fullest evidence: as a considerable Proprietor, I

might have an interest in giving you just information ; I could have none in misleading you.

The only method of leading us to the truth, that the subject will admit, is reasoning by analogy from those things of which we are most certain, to those of a like nature, in regard to which we wish to be certain. This then is the method I shall pursue, and I hope and will endeavour to do it, with as much accuracy and perspicuity as you can reasonably expect. These previous points being settled, we will now, Gentlemen, proceed to the business.

On a candid and attentive perusal of my third Chapter, it will be obvious from the whole tenor of it, that it is calculated to excite you to attempt the possession of this country, in trust for the Emperour, and thereby put a period to a destructive and inadequate war ; but can you imagine I excite you to this from the consideration of the worth of these Provinces, according to the rates standing upon the King's books ? no, it is from the consideration of their real value, and actual produce ; and the farther consideration of how much this produce would certainly be increased under an *English* Soubah.

You have been told, Gentlemen, (or my information is wrong) that the revenues of *Bengall* are rated on the King's books under three lakhs of *Sicca* rupees ; If it is said, the rents of the lands are so rated, you have been told the truth, these only go into the Royal Treasury, and to the best of my remembrance are rated at

two khorore, seventy-five, or seventy-six lac, and some odd thousands. Should this information (without looking further) be taken as a proof of my exaggeration, when my estimate expressly includes the rents of the lands, and the revenues arising from their produce? which I have estimated conjunctly at eleven khorore; and now proceed to the proof, resting it upon what those who are conversant in your affairs in *India* will admit to be an indisputable fact, that the lands throughout the provinces, bear nearly a proportional value to each other.

"I cannot with any precision charge my memory (having none of my papers with me) as to what the lands of the Company's original zemindary *Calcutta* stood rated in the King's books; it is enough for my purpose, that you and I know, they and the revenues arising from them, for many years after the Company was invested with them, scarcely yielded a net profit that recompensed the expences of collecting them. In process of time, as their servants became better acquainted with the nature of them, they became an object more and more worthy of attention; and being divided into small farms, soon produced a net annual revenue from twenty to twenty-five thousand rupees; as the knowledge of their nature and value increased, so did the rents and farms; until they brought in a net revenue of near forty thousand rupees, *per annum*. Here they seemed to be at their *ne plus ultra*; though the tenants were daily increasing, and the lands grew more fully occupied and cultivated; consequently their produce, and the consumption of
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that produce, enlarged ; which rationally indicated there should have been an increase of the rents and revenues.

This not being the case, the Gentlemen then in the Direction at home, ordered a scrutiny to be made in the office ; and upon an average taken of the net proceeds for nineteen years preceeding the year 1752, they appeared to, have produced the Company barely thirty-nine thousand rupees *per annum*. In consequence of various reforms and the detection of glaring frauds, the farms for the first time were put up to a public and unbiaſſed ſale, to the higheſt bidder ; and though ſix, by order of the then Court of Directors, were aboliſhed, a grievous and oppreſſive to the tenants, yet theſe very lands produced at the cloſe of this year, net, ſeventy-three thouſand rupees ; at the cloſe of the ſecond, one lac and thirten thouſand ; at the cloſe of the third, one lac and fourteen thouſand ; and would at the cloſe of the fourth year, to demonſtration, have produced one lac, and twenty thouſand and from the nature of the thing, would have gone on annually increaſing.

The lands of the twenty-four Purgunnahs, ceſſed to the Company by the treaty of 1757, which ſubſequentlly became Colonel *Clive's* jagghier, were rated on the King's looks at two lac, and twenty-two thouſand rupees. Theſe lands were, for the ſpace of ſixteen months, retained in hand on the Company's account, under the inſpection and ſuperintendence of a collector, Mr, *Frankland*, whoſe activity, abilities, and

and integrity, in the execution of that trust, stood unimpeached. But the Company's agents finding that by that method they should never arrive at the knowledge of the real value of these lands; determined to divide them into fifteen farms, and put them up to public sale, reserving the royalties in their own hands, from an apprehension the farmers, by being invested with them, might have it in their power to oppress the tenants. This resolution was carried into execution, I think, in July 1759, and the farms let for the term of three years; when those very lands which had produced for sixteen months only three lac, eighty-four thousand rupees, sold at this unbiassed sale for seven lac, sixty-five thousand *Sicca* rupees, *per annum*, exclusive of the royalties: and thirteen at least of the fifteen purchasers, to my knowledge were annual gainers by their bargains. In bidding to keep up two of the farms to what I had reason to think was their value, they fell upon my hands: as I had not leisure to superintend them myself, I disposed of them a few days after, for an advance of five thousand *Sicca* rupees, *per annum*, during the term of my lease. I only mention this as a corroborating proof of my last assertion.

What the Purgunnahs produced at their second sale, you, Gentlemen, know better than I, as before the expiration of the term of their first lease, I had the honor to be recalled.

To particularize every instance that might be brought in proof, or rather justification of my general estimate, would be to protract this address.

dress to a tedious length: those already produced, afford full evidence, that the revenues of the lands are very nearly in a quadruple proportion, to the rents of them; and that so far from having exaggerated, I have rather depreciated the real and intrinsic value of these provinces; especially when it is remembered, that my estimate is drawn, exclusive of the royalties, which alone are a very considerable revenue; and also that I have made no account of the many Jagghiers, nor of the immense tracts of Burmuttu lands, (so called from being set apart for the support of the *Bramins*) nor of many other possessions which pay no rents; in the grants and investitures of which, there are more fraud and collusions practised, than in every other branch of the revenues. From a scrutiny into these, a new and considerable income would arise, that has hitherto never found its way, either into the royal treasury, or into the Soubah's coffers.

I repeat then, and insist on my estimate, that exclusive of the royalties, upon an obvious and fair calculation, the whole lands of the three provinces have never yielded less than eleven khorore forty thousand *Sicca* rupees; *per annum*; and deducting for *Orissa* one khorore and a half, at which the lands and revenues of that province are usually estimated, there will remain nine khorore and a half for *Bengall* and *Babar*, to which annex the royalties, and they will more than make good the above deduction for *Orissa*.

Though I have, in my general estimate, confined myself to the consideration of the known
and

and established rents and revenues of the provinces, yet the extra items specified above, no less constitute a part of their value; and though those items have for a long course of years been concealed and embezzled from the government; that is no reason why they may not in future be brought to account by a British Soubah at the head of it; an event which I will still hope is not far distant.

Whoever attempts to depreciate this object at this juncture, can be no friend to you, your constituents, or his country; and should seem moved only by private views to prolong a war, that can benefit none, but the principal actors in it. If it has been insinuated to you, that the provinces of *Bengall* are not *alone* worthy your possession, you are now I trust, fully convinced of the contrary; and will see the necessity of putting a stop at last to the strides your servants are daily making towards acquisitions, which cannot possibly be maintained: the provinces of *Bengall* you may maintain and defend, upon the plan I have presumed already to hint to you. I will further communicate a few anecdotes relative to the lands and revenues of this country, and close this address.

The rents of the lands are the property of the Emperor. In consequence of which he has a royal Dewan, in every Soubahdaary, who ought to be accountable to the royal treasury for the whole amount of the rents, as rated upon the King's books: but as there is always a good understanding between the Dewan and the Soubah, they

they never are at a loss in pretending reasons for the rents falling short, though the whole is strictly and fully collected. What is diverted from the royal treasury, is divided between the Dewan and the Soubah, of which the latter always takes the lion's share,

Though the amount of the rents of the lands is near three khorore *per annum*; yet the highest stipulation made with the Emperor was that mentioned in another place, of one khorore, one lac, one thousand, one hundred, and one rupee, by the Soubah Soujah Khan: and this was regularly transmitted to the royal treasury, until the usurpation of *Aliverdi*. He, on pretence of the distresses of the provinces (to which distressed state he himself had brought them) made a new stipulation of fifty-two lac *per annum*; to which he paid no regard longer than the Vizir *Monsoor Ali Khan's* army was within a few days march of *Patna*, *A. D.* 1750, nor has the royal treasury benefited a rupee from these provinces since that period. This I mention, or should rather say repeat, to show how gladly the Emperor would embrace any overture, that would insure to him annually one-third of the rents of these provinces.

The established ground rent is three *Sicca* rupees *per Begah* (about one third of an *English* acre) throughout the empire; but *Aliverdi Khan* made the first innovation in this established law, and assessed the land four annas *Sicca*, or a quarter of a rupee upon each *Begah*, on pretence of the Chout paid to the *Maharajors*, and raised

rents of the Rajahs and Zemindaars in that proportion; these had no other means of reimbursing themselves, but levying it upon the farmers, and they again on the tenants. Subsequently the lands were on various pretended exigencies, at different periods, assessed to 10-16ths of a rupee, though every additional tax on land, above three *Sicca* rupees *per annum*, is contrary to the standing law of the empire; which, until *Alivard's* usurpation, had been held sacred, and inviolable. In the year 1732, your Governor and Council had in agitation the raising the rents of your own Zemindary of *Calcutta*; which being rumoured abroad, they received a peremptory *Perwannah*, from the Soubah, forbidding them; in which the Soubah told them, that they were presuming to do a thing, which he himself had not power to do; and that if they persisted, they would, by the laws of the empire, forfeit their lands.

Frauds throughout the empire in letting the lands, are manifold: for instance: The Rajah's, and Zemindaars, by private compact, with the Soubah's officers, who are charged with the management of this department, obtain more lands than by their Synods (or grants, which are commonly called *Pottahs*) appear, and consequently pay no rent to the King for the surplus land. The same artifice is practised between the Dewans of the Rajahs and Zemindaars, and the Izardaars or farmers; and the tenants, or common *Pottah* holders under them, by bribing the officers of the *Jumma Bundi*, and those intrusted with the measurements of the lands, that they may

may enjoy among them the benefit of the surplus land; and I may justly aver, there is not a tenant in *Indostan*, but possesses and occupies a greater quantity of land, than his Pottah expresses, or than he pays rent for: Consequently, it is the tenant that ultimately enjoys the benefit of the surplus land, thus gained by corruption, from the Soubah's Ministers, while the King specifically suffers in his rents. It extremely well answers the tenant's purpose, to possess, if he can by a small bribe, more land than he pays for, because himself and his heirs enjoy the profit of it in perpetuity since, by a fundamental law of the empire, their Pottahs are irrevocable, as long as they pay the rent, rated in them respectively; and so tender and indulgent are the laws of *Indostan* in this particular, that no tenant forfeits his land, before he has failed in his payments for twelve months; though the land-tax by the same laws, is to be paid every three months.

This method of secreting or purloining the land from the King and the Soubah, has been practised time out of mind; and it is quite in point, to mention a flagrant instance that appeared in the year 1753; when in consequence of the general scrutiny, made by your order in your Zemindary *Calcutta*, it was demonstrated, that in your small district, upon a favourable new measurement of your land, there were near five hundred Begah secreted in this way, and fraudulently enjoyed, by your tenants, for which you had received no ground rent from your being involved with the Zemindary; of this you may

be convinced by turning to your Jummah Bundi, or register of your lands subsequently by me transmitted to you. As you, Gentlemen, have by that measurement gained five hundred Begah of ground, upon a possession only of six thousand two hundred; you may judge from thence, what an astonishing additional revenue would arise to you, when Soubah of the provinces, from a new (though favorable) measurement of the whole lands.

When the revenues arising from the lands of this country, are retained in the proprietors hands (that is, not farmed out) one universal chain of roguery runs through the whole, as well as in the rents of the lands; and there is a fellow-feeling between every one employed in the collections, from the Dewan to the lowest Mooree, or writer; and this the Najahs and Zemindaars, (the great proprietors of the lands) are no more exempt from, than the Company is, notwithstanding the utmost integrity of their covenanted servants: but I have so clearly traced, and laid open the nature of those frauds (which are similar throughout the empire) in my state of the Company's revenues Zemindary, dated the 15th of *December*, 1752, that I need not trouble you further on that subject, than to refer you thereto.

The whole intention and aim of these communications, is to persuade and convince you, that be the Company's possessions in that country what they will, either less or more; you will never get at their true value, or derive to yourselves

selves and constituents the half of their net advantages, by keeping them in hand: the remedy is obvious.—If they are divided into farms, in value from five thousand rupees, to one lac *per annum*, and put up to public sale to the highest bidder, under the same restrictions and exclusions as were stipulated at the sale of your twenty-four Purgunnahs, then most probably, five-sixths of their real value would esult to the Company. And I cannot enough congratulate your having happily appointed a Gentleman (Mr. *Sumner*) to succeed Lord *Clive* in the government, who is intimately acquainted with, and conversant in all matters relative to the lands and revenues; and most capable of carrying your orders on these heads into execution.

To save you the trouble of references, I will subjoin two letters, the one addressed to the the board of *Calcutta*, the other to a former chairman; as they are both strictly connected with the subject, and will add strength and weight to my arguments.

I have the honour to be with most perfect respect,

Gentlemen,

Your most Obedient Humble Servant,

J. Z. HOLWELL:

To C. Manningham, Esq;
&c. Council.

Calcutta; •
June 11, 1759.

SIR and SIRs,

I Beg leave to trouble you with a few sentiments on the disposal of the company's lands, which have, for some time past, been the object of our Councils; the subject is of importance to our honourable employers, and cannot be too much deliberated on.

I believe we are all unanimous, in some circumstances, which more particularly require our attention in this affair; to wit, the honour of the Company, the acquiring a perfect knowledge in the value of the lands; the making this branch of the revenues less complicated and intricate, as well as less expensive in the collecting;—but with respect to the means, we seem not quite so clear.—Any one gentleman declaring fully his opinion on your consultations, may possibly make us unanimous here also.

The step we are already determined in, of divesting the farmers of all power in the royalties and judicial authorities in the Purgunnahs, bids fair for the security of the Company's honor; as these articles being heretofore also farmed, became the source of heavy cruelties and oppressions on the tenants.—But still there seems to be something wanting to give us a perfect security in this particular;—and that is, to take the utmost care in our power, that the whole body

body of the lands do not, by any junto, or private confederacy, fall into the hands of people, with whom we should not trust any part of our fortunes or confidence. I am urged to this precaution, from the proposal laid before you the fourth instant, by six or seven conspicuous natives of the settlement, of an advance of 110,001 rupees on the whole lands. With respect to their proposal, I will only add an offer of 10,000 rupees more *per annum* on their terms:—not that I wish myself, or any one else, in possession of them, on terms so vague and artful.

That keeping the lands in our own hands, will never lead to a knowledge of their real value, is now (to me) proved beyond contradiction.——Some of those who signed the proposal of the fourth, are well conversant in the nature of this undertaking; and better judges (as I am informed) are concerned, though as yet they act behind the curtain; and to me it is inconceivable, that these Eastern Machiavels in finesse, would offer such an annual advance, without a moral certainty of adequate gains. In this position, I am still more confirmed, by the advance offered from other quarters, on distant and garbled parts of the Purgunnabs, which in fact exceeds the other.

If we have been hitherto kept so far from the knowledge of the real value of these lands, after sixteen months possession, what are we to expect when, from the course of the service, they are no longer under the conduct of the present col-

lector?—whose knowledge of this branch, must be greatly superior to any Gentleman that succeeds him; and whose vigilance in the execution of this trust, cannot be exceeded. From the experience I have had, in infinitely a less, though similar object, I know it is impossible for any one Gentleman, with the most extensive talents and integrity, to superintend this revenue in such manner as to prevent the Company being injured. His attention cannot be every where, confidence must be placed in a multitude; and it happens unluckily that this confidence centers from necessity, in a race of people, who, from their infancy, are utter strangers to the idea of common faith, or honesty.

The other plan of disposing of the lands, to the multitude of people who have offered an advance on particular parts of the purgunnahs; have strong, and equal objections to: I am sensible these objections should have been laid before you sooner, and would, had I thought myself sooner master of the subject. We know not what, or who these people are; I foresee a very great risque of deficiencies in the rents, as well as much confusion, and needless expence, entailed on this expedient; and ourselves removed as far as ever, from gaining a knowledge of the real value of this new and important acquisition. On the whole therefore I am of opinion, that there is no effectual method to arrive at the knowledge of, and make the lands yield every advantage to our honourable employers, but by putting them up to public sale, in single Purgunnahs, under the restrictions already published.

People of substance will then be the only bidders for an intire Purgunnah; the bad and unprofitable parts, will go with the good and valuable; and the risque of deficiencies in the rents, be guarded against; the expence of collecting will in a manner be reduced to nothing; and this branch of the service be rendered less complicated and intricate, by having twenty-four purchasers to account with only, in place of five or six hundred.

I am with respect, &c.

J. Z. H.



To JOHN PAYNE, Esq;

Calcutta.

Dec. 30, 1759.

Dear Sir,

TO shorten my remarks on the important subject of your lands I inclose you a copy of my letter to the Councils of the 11th of *June*, when the Colonel was ~~rush~~ the *Patna* expedition; it produced to our effect, than postponing our resolves, until his arrival; when the affair being resumed, he did me the honour, with the rest of the board, of thinking my reasons for the public sale of the lands by auction, unanswerable; and the same was resolved on unanimously. The event more than answered ~~thy~~, expectation. I had taken great pains in ferretting out the real value of the lands, which was ~~over~~ with almost impenetrable obscurity, and difficulties; and by an estimate I give the Colonel at his return, ventured to pronounce they would yield seven lac and a half; and the ~~total~~ of their sale on the 13th of *July*, amounted to seven lac, sixty-five thousand seven hundred *Sicca* rupees, *per annum*, exclusive of several reserves in favour of the Company; such as a considerable tract of land taken from the *Purgunnah*, adjoining to *Calcutta*, to extend it's bounds; and all advantages resulting from holding the royal-ties, and judicial proceedings, &c. in our own hands on the Company's account, so that I judge the whole produce of these lands (the before mentioned reserves included) will be annually between nine and ten lac; the sum I guessed in
(*England*)

England) they would produce, when once in conference with you upon the subject. From this the Colonel's Jagghir of two lac, twenty-two thousand rupees being deducted, there will remain a net annual revenue to the Company of about seven lac, eighty thousand rupees *Sicca per annum*, on the same lands, which yielded the last year when the revenues were collected on the government's plan, only three lac, eighty-four thousand, or thereabout as you will learn from the accounts of this revenue now transmitted to the Company. I see the court of Directors stare with astonishment at this increase; you will stare too, my dear Sir, as a proprietor. Methinks I hear them and you cry out! What the Devil became of this difference the last year? as it must have been collected beyond a doubt; or from whence can this advance answer to the present farmers? The answer is easy and obvious;—the difference fell short, in its way to the Company's treasury by the self-same roads, your former revenues were dissipated, prior to the reform in your Zemindary.—As your former Zemindars could not justly be deemed culpable in that case, from the frequent change of the post; so in the present no blame properly falls on your collector, the trust being too extensive for any one man existing; though the frauds are equally obvious, from the extraordinary increase at a fair and public sale, where the farmers were laid under every possible check and restraint, that can either prevent their debasing their lands, or oppressing the tenants; and yet there is a moral certainty of profit to him, at the expiration of the three

three years; and that they will then yield a further increase to the Company.—

Before I entirely quit the subject of the lands, I must clear up a circumstance, that possibly may be cause of wonder to you, viz. by what means I arrived at their real value.—In the first place, I had long and full conviction, that the same system of fraud and chicane, ran through every Zemindary of the provinces; and from a general knowledge of the country granted to us, it appeared to me most astonishing, they should yield no more than was brought to the Company's credit, at the close of the year in *April* last; when so small a territory as *Calcutta*, produced, on a scrutiny and reform, an increase of 78 to 80,000 *Sicca* rupees *per annum*.—I tried various means to trace out satisfactory reasons, and to account to myself for it, but without success, until I learnt by accident that three or four of the old standards employed as tax-gatherers, and writers in the Purgunnahs, had been dismissed, at the instigation of the new operators. I sent privately for one or two of the most creditable of them, and enquired into the cause of their dismissal; and this brought on an opening of the whole scene; and gave me sufficient foundation for forming my letter of the 11th of *June*.—Thus, Sir, having made you master of this subject, in as short a detail as possible, I shall close it with this remark; that the same chain of frauds runs through the whole empire, but more particularly in these provinces to the heavy and annual loss of the crown; a circumstance which
may

may in a future favorable conjuncture, be well worth consideration : at present we have but to ask and have a more easy acquisition of the Soubahdary, than that we have already obtained of the Purgunnars; but the times are not yet ripe for so great a grasp, nor have we sufficient strength to hold it; though it is certain, were we Soubahs of the provinces the emperor would regularly receive more than double the revenues these provinces ever produced to him; and the *East-India* Company becomes in a short time, the richest body of subjects in the world.—

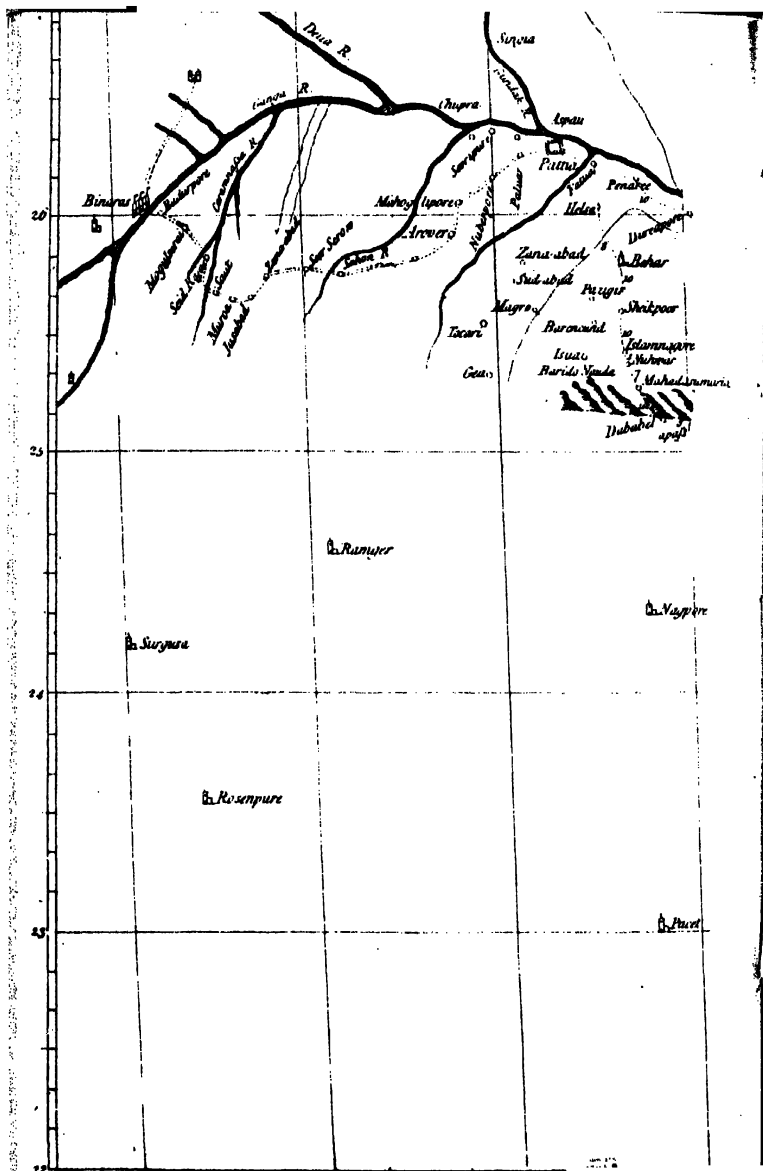
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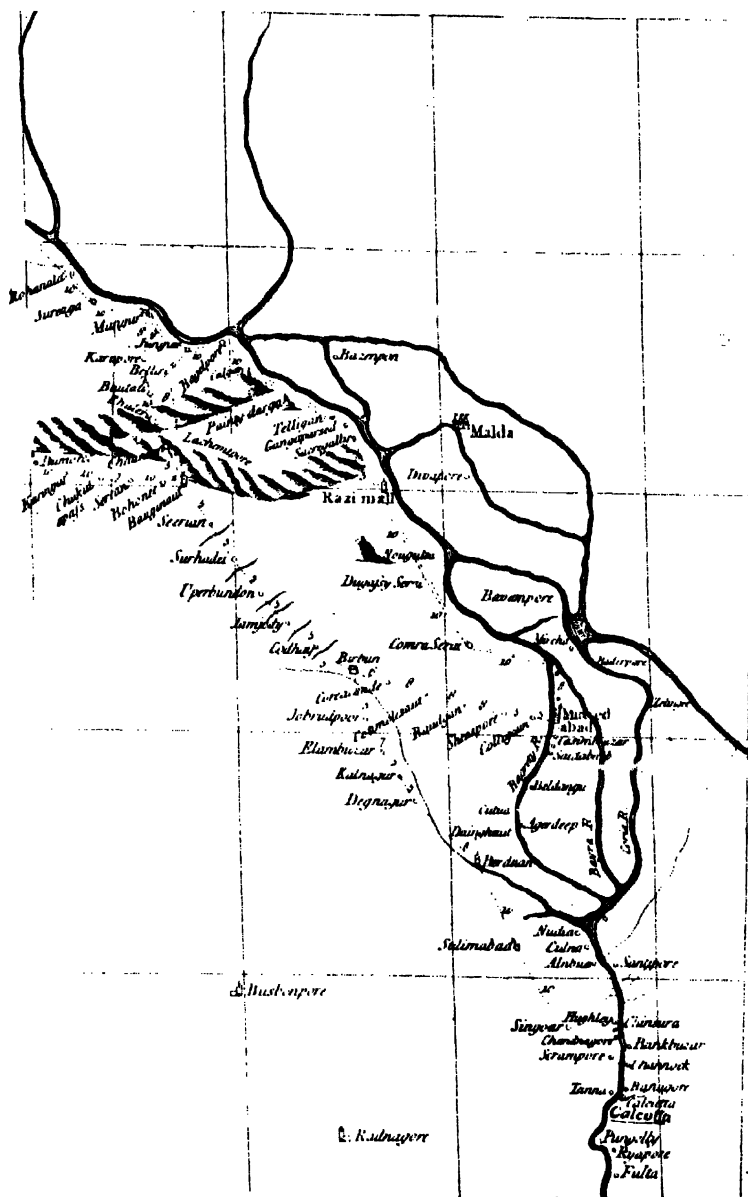
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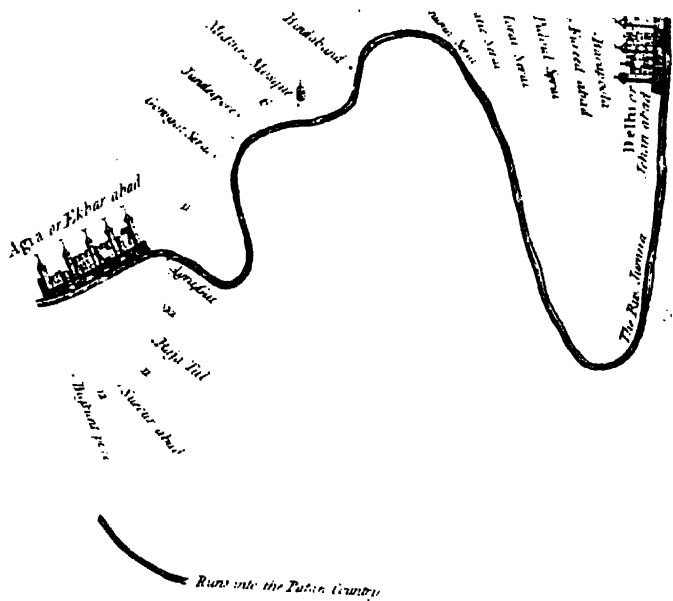
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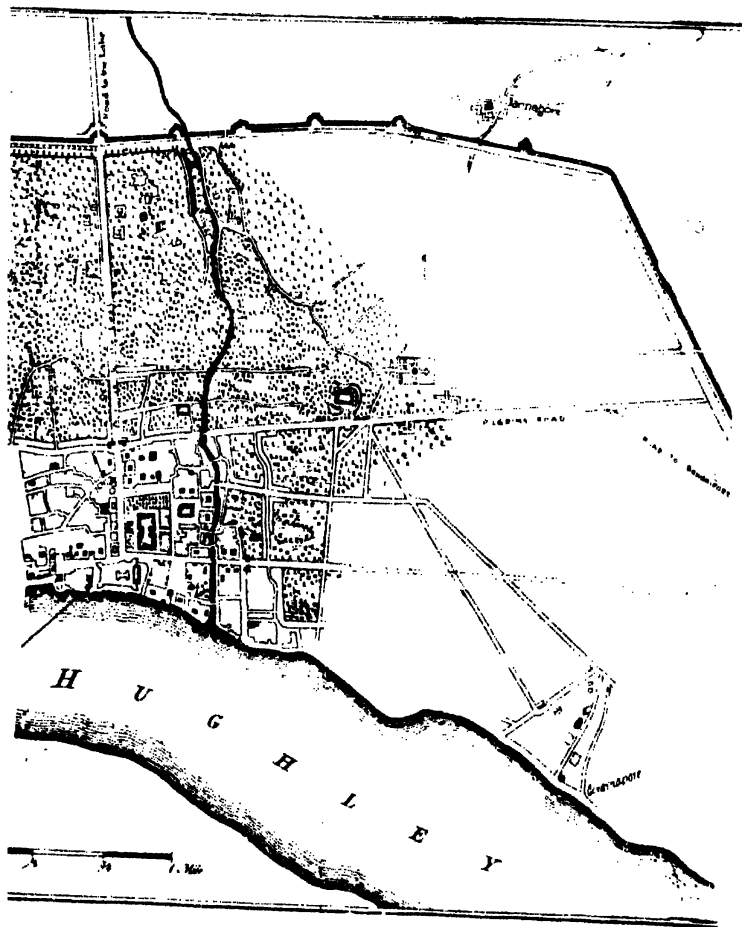








THE ASIATIC SOCIETY, CALCUTTA





SCHAH ORANGZEEF

